February 6, 1981 #152

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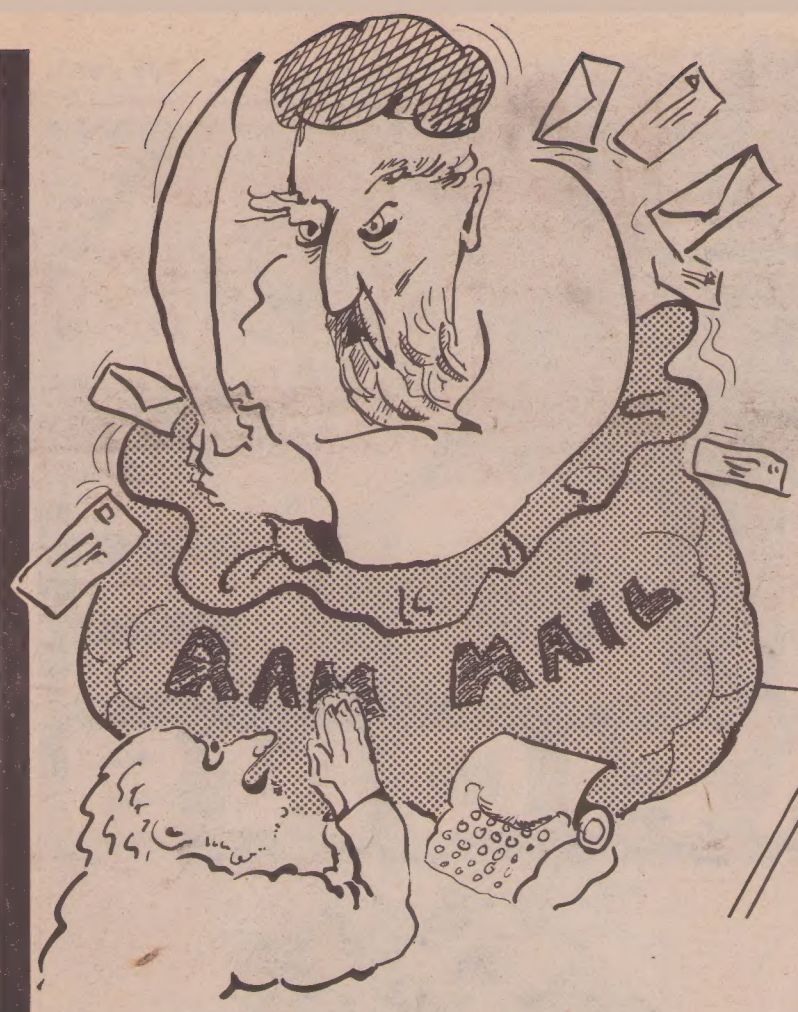
RAM

ROCK POLL RESULTS

PLUS ROXY MUSIC MIRACLE INGREDIENT!

POLICE INVESTIGATIONS

DIRE STRAITS
CAPTAIN BEEFHEART
ORCHESTRAL MANOEUVRES
IN THE DARK
FLEETWOOD MAC
SHERBS



"Another year in this crummy joint and they'll be sending back 52 loonies to the States."

"Well, at least this Hyatt Regency Caspian is better than that stinking mudhut in Qom - and we won't be here another year, anyway. I heard they're going to pay the money..."

"Says who? If they do, no American'd be safe overseas again... I tell you, they'd rather have us martyred by those bloody mullahs, then drop the big one..."

"Don't say that... my big worry is who's gonna be first off the mark with the big magazine articles and the books when we get back. If only there was some way we could get some real letters past the students - we could be earning bucks while we're sitting it out."

"Hey, that's not a bad idea. What say we sent them in some sort of code - and mailed them to some organisation that the Iranians couldn't ever connect with the CIA...?"

RAM LETTERS. PO BOX 746, DARLINGHURST. NSW 2010

OUTDOOR POLICE BLUES I

Well, stuff a fat monkey! What top-notch people The Police have turned out to be! Weren't they the ones who said they preferred small venues? Maybe they are so blinded by their success that they failed to see that the Sydney Showground was a *rather* large venue. Which means I'm going to have to pay $12.90 to see three pogoing ants, and probably get a fucking beer can chucked at me. Somehow I think I'll stay at home. SHIT! SHIT! SHIT! I really love The Police's music but along with thousands of others (I think), I hate bloody outdoor concerts. Maybe I'm wrong, and if I have misjudged The Police could someone please tell me, but for the time being, I think they are three BIG shit-faces who want as much money as they can get, with no concern for the fans who gave them that money in the first place.
Yours shitingly,
An ex-snorter

POLICE BLUES 2

I'm getting the shits by the top bands staging outdoor concerts. I for one much prefer the indoor shows and I am sure so do many others. I can understand a circus like Kiss being outside, but not first class bands like AC/DC or The Police. I'm not a crazy fart that hates The Police, I reckon they are unreal but on their last tour they claimed to go for the close crowd and have their fans near them, but how could they say that and then do outdoor shows. Is it that the Police have become hypocritical turds or money grabbers? and when will Sydney get a suitable facility for concerts?
Shane,
Maroubra, NSW.

We tried to contact The Police - unfortunately they were on the move in America, but they may have some answers when they arrive in Oz. Frontier Tour's head, Michael Chugg, says he's aware of the Showground problems and intends to try to minimise them as much as possible, especially in the area of stage distance from audience. "It's more a matter of time than money," he says. "They've been on the road since May - originally they only wanted to do four shows here, but we got them up to seven." Sadly, the two indoor shows in Melbourne mean good conditions for the few, and no show for the thousands of other Melbournites who couldn't get tickets - see below.

POLICE BLUES 3

I am writing to whinge about being ripped off when buying tickets for the forthcoming Police tour of Oz.

I heard the ad. for the ticket sales a couple of days before the event, so I organised my brother to go down and buy some for me at Myers in Frankston, as I was working. He was the third person to buy tickets at the Bass agency at 9.05am (I was told they all open at 9.00am a few days before on the phone). He and the first and second persons *all* received section 8 seats, about the worst seats in Festival Hall.

I was really pissed off when I got the tickets. I went to the Bass agency in Myers to see who fucked up. They couldn't tell me so I rang up the head office of Bass. I was told all the other Bass agencies decided to open early as they had many people waiting. By the time Frankston opened only the shit seats were left. They also told me that the promoter (Frontier Touring Co.) took the first five rows of section 6 (the best seats in the Hall), and that employees at Myers buy tickets before the public does. Bass wouldn't take any responsibility even though they state 'a fair distribution of tickets', and Myers wouldn't take any responsibility. It seems that to get good seats from Bass you have to work at Myers and hope the promoter hasn't taken all the good seats.

At least when you're up the front of the line at the Hall or J.C.W. you know you'll get good seats.

Patricia Casali of the Melbourne Mitchells Bass head office agreed there had been many complaints about the booking for the first Police concert. "Bass has no control when Myers open their stores; it was the Christmas period, and the queues outside some stores were immense." When it was realised the rush had come in inequally, the next concert bookings were held to the middle of the day, so that all agencies went on line at once. One can only hope that this becomes standard procedure.

As for the promoter's and Myer's staff access... it's just a fact of life. Even without any hanky panky, shop staff are liable to be closer to the agency than the public when the doors open...

COMB & CUTTER VOLUME

In reply to Bill Gibson's letter (Ish. 149), re volume at the Comb and Cutter, Blacktown, I feel obliged to defend the hotel. Speaking from experience, as I have been the resident D.J. at the Cutter for 3½ years, I'd like to contradict most strongly Mr. Gibson's statement - Quote - "I rolled in to find the disco blaring out probably as loud as any band I've ever seen, including Chisel."

I wonder what Chisel would say to that? Common sense will tell anybody, that it is in no way possible for me to sound as loud as Chisel, or any other band for that matter.

Fundamental arithmetic will tell you that no way in the world could I compete against a P.A. pumping out 3000 Watts. After all, my poor little amp is flat out pushing out 400 Watts.

Anyway, if Mr. Gibson, by his own admission, is suffering from industrial deafness, then maybe he shouldn't go to any venues, let alone write and complain about the volume.
Yours faithfully,
Peter James.

The arithmetic isn't that fundamental: a 3000 Watt P.A. system would never be run at anything like full-out inside a room the size of the Comb & Cutter. Perhaps Mr. Gibson's perceptions are subjective - but we've often felt the same thing about the apparent disco volume compared to band levels, all around the country. Anyway, the only objective test is a decibel reading, rather than a comparison of amp capability.

MI-SEX, WHOSE LADIES?

To attend a Mi-Sex concert at the moment is really placing your life in your hands, that is if you are a lady. People try to get rid of you from all angles. Not only do you get verbal abuse, but you also get threatened with bottles, kicked, elbowed, tripped, scratched, bitten, pushed into walls and if you are really lucky you have a knife pulled on you. This is not by the male contingency but the wonderful ladies trying to get rid of anyone not like themselves. This is not restricted to Sydney but as we have found also occurs in Queensland and it is not restricted to the concert itself but in the street as well.

We have been seeing Mi-Sex since their arrival in Sydney but find it impossible to continue putting up with this situation although we still enjoy their music and think they are among the best musicians in Australasia.

We would just like to thank these 'lovely' ladies for the reputations and injuries they have given us over the last two years.
Signed
BUT WE DO CARE.

Anyone else suffering fierce femmes? Has Equal Opportunity given women the right to be violent idiots too...?

sABBAth

To The Bastard In Charge.

Why did you send a fucking ABBA fan to the heroic Black Sabbath concert?
From Two Black Sabbath Fans.
'Cause he begged - T.B.I.C.

A CHRISTIAN, VIRGIN PUNK

I totally agree with a certain Fed-Up-Punk who wrote a letter in issue 149. I don't know who this certain Craig Bloxom is, but there is certainly more of his kind around. I'm also fed up with the people who think punks are violent, nasty, dirty and riddled with safety pins. That's utter garbage!

I've been a punk for almost a year and happen to be a Christian. I may not wear normal clothes, but they're certainly not dirty and full of safety pins. I don't take drugs, get drunk or fight. I'm also still a virgin. I think I've got downright better morals than most people in this country.

Alright, I admit there is some violent and nasty punks around, but isn't there in all walks of life. We're just as much a part of society as everybody else.

All that safety pin, bondage crap went out about 3 years ago so all you unobservant people out there wake up. Especially all you 'Apprentice Punks' and 'Weekend Punks'. Punk isn't violent, anti-Everything, it's music and having a lot of fun. So wake up and give a punk a go. Punks are OK.
ANOTHER FED-UP PUNK.

BAND EGOS

After seeing bands for over a year, I have become depressed at the 'INFLATED EGOS' many of them seem to suffer from once they 'hit the big time'. They seem to think they suddenly become too important to bother mingling with US - (the fools who buy their records).

I reckon no matter how good a band sounds on record if they are up themselves on stage then they're not worth spitting on, let alone success.

Thank god for bands like The Riptides, who, although rapidly growing in popularity have the professionalism to handle it. It's not uncommon to see any of the guys talking to 'followers, fans and **friends**' before a gig.

Thanks for treating us as humans rather than just paying idiots.
Riptides Rager.

BLAME IT ON THE MIXER?

With so many good Australian bands around taking their work so seriously, one might think that their road crews would be just as serious about their work but, unfortunately for all of us, it seems there is one person in the road crews who can only be taken seriously 50% of the time. I'm talking about the guy on the mixing desk.

A couple of weeks ago I saw Flowers at the Playroom on the Gold Coast and the sound mix was to say the least - bloody awful!!

Every time Keith Welsh played a note on the bass it felt like you'd been slapped across both ears, it was so damn loud.

Meanwhile Iva Davies may as well have unplugged his guitar because we just couldn't hear it.
Yours faithfully,
Gary Ronan.
Consistently good sound men are worth their weight in gold: they often earn more than members of the band. This is understandable: not only do they have to be as musically sensitive as the players, but they have to adjust instantly to the 1001 little things that can screw up with the gear. Consistently bad ones will be sacked quick smart if the band's management can tell the difference between good sound and bad sound (unfortunately the band can never tell what the main air sounds like). For the rest - all you can do is keep complaining, as precisely as possible.

DEAR ABBY...

I have a problem. I am 22 years old and I like Genesis, Mike Oldfield, Johnny Winter and Ravi Shankar, often with strawberry incense. I really don't fancy falling into a tar-pit, so what do you think I should do?
Signed,
Dinosaur Neville.
And you can send your sensible suggestions to: 17 Staff Road, Unanderra, N.S.W. 2526.

ASHAMED OF BRISBANE

Can Brisbane continue to attract Southern bands?

Brisbane is not renowned for its polite concert-goers but last Friday (5.12.80) greeted the Numbers with apathy and a simultaneous rudeness. While the Numbers sweated their bums off trying to entertain an altogether boring audience, some trendy punks and drunks found it necessary to come out of ignorant oblivion and voice their frustrations by insulting the band. One wonders if a similar reaction could be achieved by playing the radio!

Such a response cannot be encouraging or inspirational to a group already stifled by blaring heat, smoke and overcrowding. I was absolutely apalled when one female - can I call her by any other name - showed her Neanderthal tendencies by spitting on one of the singers and, failing to create a sensation, began to display her somewhat limited sign language of obscenities. A glass of water was the least Annalisse could give her to cool off her hot body! Such behaviour as spitting and swearing at the band is neither admired or respected, after all if she didn't like their music why did she come.

I feel an apology should be made to Annalisse Morrow who, in attempting to create a good concert for our enjoyment, was treated like less than a bag of shit. Personally, I would like to thank Numbers for coming to Brisbane and congratulate them for their performances while here.
B.J.
Auchenflower.

WHAT WEDDING?

RAM,

We know that these may not be the best days for lovers, but how do you figure (RAM-ewe 150th issue), that 44.7% of Oz males are separated from their wives, whilst less females are separated from their husbands? Has the bigamist (no, not an Italian fog) been legalised in Oz, is homosexual marriage (whatever that is) becoming popular or what?

Speaking of which, have you ever considered getting married Mister RAM? The name 'RAM-EWE' would sound pretty wild for a rock magazine.
Are you sure you've written to the right magazine? RAM 150 (a fine curly-fleeced number), knows nothing of your figures...
Mrs. RAM (nee Ewe) thinks you're pulling my forequarter.

DEAR MR STIGWOOD

I guess you and the Bros. aren't getting along too well, right? So I've got an idea for a new album. It's basically about the ultimate destruction of Mankind (ie. The Bee Gees), by his own hand.

The story, Bob, goes like this:

Maurice and Barry have just murdered Robin, because both their wives went for a rude weekend in Robin's holiday house in Alaska. (Unknown to them, Robin was actually in New York at the time.)

You, Robert, play the Prosecutor...it's kind of like 'Berlin', but the kids can dance to it.

Anyway, I've got the ideas - you've got the money. Zevon has sent you the tapes, and I'll write the words in a minute. Just send us a photo of the Bros brandishing a bloody axe over the disco floor, and we'll be back in business!
Your friend,
Andy.

The Chief Censor edged timidly past the assembled mullahs towards the seated figure in black, bowed low and presented the mail report. The silence grew as the Ayatollah peered through the letters. Finally he looked up.

"Send them on, Mustapha. Our holy vengeance squad will be despatched to deal with this limb of Satan, this RAM..."

DIRT

Phil Manning, Matt Taylor, Roy Daniels (bass) and Ric Whittle (drums). (Pic: Fiona Girvan-Brown)

CHAIN BLUES LEGENDS RELINK

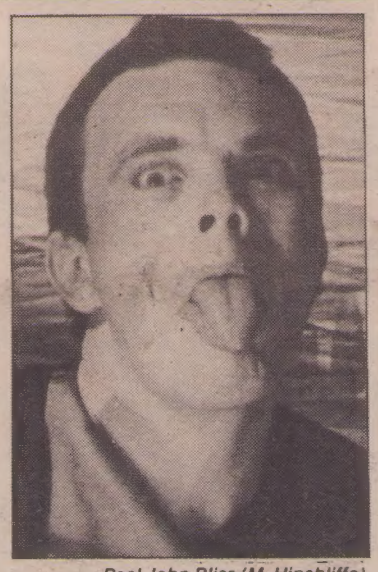
Matt Taylor and **Phil Manning** are back together again - the first time the two have played since the glory days of **Chain** in 1970. Matt has been working around Perth for the past few years, most notably with the group **Western Flyer** and with blues guitarist **Dave Hole**. Phil Manning, after a stop-start solo career, seemed to have dropped almost out of sight for the past two years. He was in fact living and playing the blues in Tasmania and New Zealand. He arrived unexpectedly in Perth last Christmas Eve, renewed his friendship with Matt and the two have been rehearsing a new band ever since. They start playing around Perth in early Feb. and hit other Oz states soon afterwards. Album recording sessions are in the air, with optimistic sales forecasts following the success of the **Kevin Borich/Dutch Tilders** sessions - 1980's shining example of the evergreen popularity of hard-edged rhythm'n'blues. *(See R'n'B feature next ish).*

YOU WANNA BE A FILM STAR? IT'S DEAD EASY!

That' what **Bert Deling**, director of the infamous *Pure Shit* among others says: he and producer **John Weiley** of Firebird Films are making a million dollar budget feature called *Dead Easy* about real life in Kings Cross, 1980 style. *'George is a hustler, Alex is a hooker, Armstrong is a cop. None of them has turned 21 . . .'* and Delling is looking beyond established actors to fill these leads. "We want to talk to anyone around the rock'n'roll scene who thinks they can make it in films. If you can stand up behind a microphone you can probably act as well."

Even if you're not a pro performer, but think you ought to be, they'll listen: ring Helen Rolland on 908 1211 for an appointment.

Deling hasn't finalised the soundtrack though **Cold Chisel**'s visions of Cross life seem an inspiration: whoever it is, "The film is going to be fast, and have rock'n'roll all the way through."



Reel John Bliss (M. Hinchliffe)

THE PRICE OF RAM

Inflation's got us all by the neck. The recent general wage order, increases in paper prices and production services have forced us up 10 cents. We didn't like it last time, (November '79), and we don't like it now: all we can do is keep on trying to give you value for money.

Angus Young

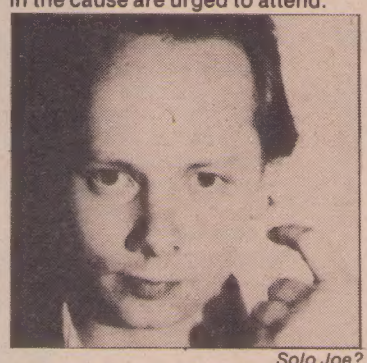
Bizarre details have come in on the equipment to be used in the upcoming **AC/DC** tour. The stage will be 60 feet wide and 40 feet deep with an extra 32 feet on each side to accommodate the 50,000 watt PA. If the volume isn't enough to rock you there are 450 lights to dazzle you. Four semi-trailers will be needed to cart all this around the country. One of those will probably be required just to carry the one and a half ton specially tuned brass bell which is only struck once in the concert for the opening number *Hell's Bells*. The bell was bought for £8000 in England and cost $7000 to bring to Australia, which over six concerts averages out to roughly $1170 a chime. Eat your heart out Quasimodo. The total entourage for the three band bill of AC/DC, **Angels** and **Swanee** numbers 56, including band members, management, sound and lighting men and roadies, but excluding wives, girlfriends, groupies, journalists and general hangerson.

Sydney's inner city rock venues come - and they go. One recent expiration was **The Rock Garden,** or The Black Hole Of Woolloomooloo as some liggers referred to it. Thus apart from the perennial Manzil Room (or Mongrel Room, or Mandrax Room, or . . .) there are no inner city gigs with a late liquor license. But salvation is in sight a few miles from town with the planned re-opening of **Selinas** in Coogee. After extensive renovation it is now claimed to be able to seat 2000 people. Until it is sighted with our own eyes, we are still wondering where they are going to find 2000 pygmies and will they like rock'n'roll anyway?

Those masters of versatility **The Reels** are out to astound us again. Following their *5 Great Gift Ideas* EP, which is beginning to dent the charts around Australia, The Reels will be releasing their second album titled *Comedy*, containing all original material, in late February. The band also plan while in New Zealand this month to record a Heavy Metal EP (the mind boggles) which might see the light of day around the middle of the year. On a more bizarre note: after a recent Sydney gig David Mason received a call from his old idol **Smokey Dawson,** who waxed enthusiasm over their version of *According To My Heart*, apologised for not being able to attend the show, and proposed that maybe he and The Reels should get together to do a few concerts. Smokey's horse is reputedly sulking and refusing to eat its oats because it was not included in the plans. Other observers have interpreted this behaviour differently, commenting that the poor old nag is just stuffed.

Even **Angels** can't make the sun go down . . . in a classic mixup, the combined effects of outdoor venue curfews and Daylight Saving Time have conspired to send The Angels on in daylight, during their forthcoming double-header tour with **AC/DC** in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide. At least their lighting director will have an easy tour . . .

The **Rock Against Racism Concert** has had a change of date to Monday 26th January, but the venue, the Sydney Town Hall, remains the same. Proceedings will kick off at midday and the bands to appear include three Aboriginal bands, **No Fixed Address, Us Mob** and **Black Lace;** a Jamaican reggae band, **Un Tubu;** and four white Sydney bands, **Metro, Singles, Streetlevel** and **Motorco.** There is also a possibility that further entertainment will be provided by **The Aboriginal and Islanders Dance Group.** All those interested in the cause are urged to attend.



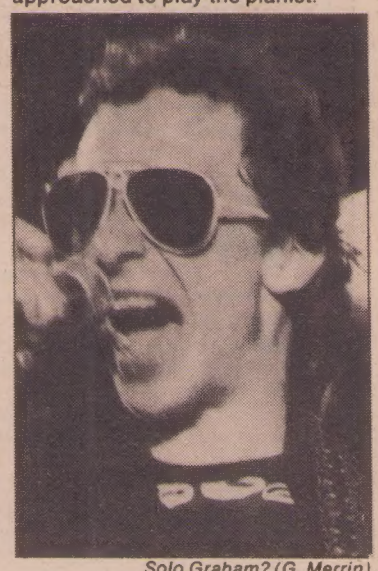
Solo Joe?

The Joe Jackson Band have split up after three years together and three albums. Following drummer Dave Houghton's decision to leave the group permanently, Jackson decided to split the band up altogether in order to "free himself from the responsibility of having a permanent band". Jackson has no plans for forming another band, but he has suggested that in the future bass player Graham Maby might be involved with new plans. Joe is taking some time off to work on projects "not necessarily involved with music".

Jon English, who recently parted company with cohorts Baxter Funt, is off to England with long-term colleague guitarist **Mario Millo** to record his next album, and to pick up session musos for a month long tour of Sweden. The pair's collaboration, *Six Ribbons*, was big news in the home of the Furry Abba.

The **Saints,** whose much-heralded return-home tour of Oz has been far from a financial success, are going back to France 'indefinitely'. But they'll be leaving behind a new album, as yet untitled but due for release in a matter of weeks.

The uncomfirmed rumour of the week is that **Blondie's Debbie Harry** has been, is, or will be going into the studio with **Nile Rodgers** and **Bernard Edwards** of **Chic** to record a solo album. This follows on the revelation that Blondie drummer **Clement Burke** wanted the duo to produce *Autoamerican*. Current Blondie projects now in the works include songwriting for the next LP and the 'authorised' Blondie book by **Chris Stein** and Debbie Harry. Debbie has also signed to make a movie titled *American Rhapsody*. She will play what is described as 'an LA rock'n'roll woman' who becomes part of a love triangle with a Russian concert pianist and his wife. Much to Leon Berger's disappointment he has not been approached to play the pianist.



Solo Graham? (G. Merrin),

It appears that **Graham Parker** and **The Rumour** have come to a parting of the ways. Reliable sources claimed that The Rumour are heading to the US to work with **Garland Jeffreys** for the whole of 1981. Meanwhile it's understood that Graham Parker, who recently got married, was drafting new plans - including the making of an acoustic album.

THE SPORTS MR. PAUL HITCHINS NOT SACKED APOLOGY AND RETRACTION

In the issue of RAM dated September 19, 1980 we published an article on The Sports. Mr Paul Hitchins, an ex-drummer with the group, has pointed out to us that the article was incorrect, that he was not sacked and that his skill, competence and integrity were maligned in this article.

RAM magazine, together with the current members of The Sports, acknowledge that the article was incorrect and that Mr. Hitchins was not sacked but had in fact given reasonable and proper notice of his intention to resign as a member of the group.

RAM magazine, together with the current members of The Sports, wish to apologise to Mr. Hitchins for the publication of the article, the unfounded reference to him being unfit (professionally), lacking integrity and for any embarrassment he has suffered as a result of the article.

The Sports achieved considerable critical esteem and popular success with Mr. Hitchins as an integral member of the group. The Sports acknowledge that Mr. Hitchins contributed to this success with his own professional skills and competence, which in the opinion of the current members of The Sports, are of the highest standard.

inter-national tourists

John Mayall
January
23 Comb & Cutter Hotel, Bcktwn.
24 Bayview Tavern, Gladesville
30 Village Hotel, Melbourne
31 Sandringham Hotel, Melb.
31 Bombay Rock (late)
February
1 Ferntree Gully Hotel, Vic.
3 Prospect Hill Hotel
4 Council Club Hotel
5 Doncaster Hotel
6 Arkaba Hotel, Adleaide
10 Princess Theatre, Launceston
11 City Hall, Hobart
12-24 Vic & N.S.W. country

Police
February
16 Showgrounds, Sydney
19 Festival Hall, Bris.
21-22 Festival Hall, Melb.
24 Memorial Drive, Adelaide
26 Entertainment Centre, Perth

Roxy Music
January 28 - February 13

AC/DC
February
13 Entertainment Centre, Perth
17 Memorial Drive, Adelaide
20 Showgrounds, Sydney
23 Festival Hall, Brisbane
27 Myer Music Bowl, Melb.

Little River Band
January
26 Memorial Drive, Adelaide
27 Entertainment Centre, Perth
29 Festival Hall, Melbourne
30 Hordern Pavilion, Sydney
February
1 Motordome, Newcastle

Charlie Daniels Band
January
26 Memorial Drive, Adelaide
27 Entertainment Centre, Perth
29 Festival Hall, Melbourne
30 Hordern Pavilion, Sydney
February
1 Motordome, Newcastle

Willie Nelson
February
14 Showgrounds, Sydney
16 Festival Hall, Brisbane
21 Showgrounds, Melbourne
24 Memorial Drive, Adelaide
27 Entertainment Centre, Perth

BOZ SCAGGS *THE NEW ALBUM* **HITS!**

FEATURING
LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE TO ME

PLUS
MISS SUN

CBS

LP SBP 237560
Cassette PC 7560

BREAKDOWN DEAD AHEAD

LIDO SHUFFLE

YOU CAN HAVE ME ANY TIME

STILL FALLING FOR YOU

LOWDOWN

WE'RE ALL ALONE

JOJO

WHAT CAN I SAY

NOTICE OF EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE CONTEMPORARY MUSIC INDUSTRY ABC RADIO STUDIO 221 IN FORBES ST. ON MONDAY FEB. 9 AT 7.00 PM.

The Contemporary Music Industry is everyone who works in or with music, on a full time or part time basis. The Industry includes bands, solo and session musicians, recording studio personnel, roadies, equipment, lighting and sound people, managers, agents, bookers, record company people, radio station people, promoters, people who write about or photograph rock . . .
Basically, those involved know who they are. Nominations are hereby called for a 12-person representative executive body to get and keep the Contemporary Music Industry moving - for the benefit of everyone involved.
If you would like to nominate for the committee, or would like to nominate someone, please send notice of nomination to P.O. Box 144, Milsons Point, NSW 2061 by January 27. Please address the envelope "Contemporary Music Industry Nomination".
Above all, if your life and money is contemporary music, be at Studio 221 on Monday, February 9 at 7.00 pm.

(This notice was prepared and authorised by an ad hoc steering committee for the Contemporary Music Industry including Michael Chugg, Peter Rix, Harry Della, Greg Borshmann, Stephen Copeland, Colin Baldwyn, Harry Widmer, Anthony O'Grady, Barry Farrell, Leon Concannon, Les Cook and Peter Radcliffe)

For more than 12 months, the popular entertainment industry has been faced with uncertainty, and worse, open harassment. Ignorant legislators and conservative local councils are partly to blame. And, antagonistic interference from the police force is once again becoming a major problem.

The challenges and problems are so great it is time we, the industry, sat down to formulate some framework for a representative association or governing body. This body would attempt to solve - by mediation and consenseus - problems within the industry and also act as a coherent and powerful lobby on our behalf dealing with the powers that be in this land. They are not going to go away if we continue to ignore them. We have to learn to cope with the demands of an ever expanding bureaucracy.

The events leading to the current crisis

The current malaise came into sharp focus in NSW in late November, 1979, when the Attorney-General, Mr. Frank Walker, announced dramatic changes to the Liquor Act. Principally, Sunday trading was to be introduced and all hotel hours extended from 10pm to 11pm. However, a form of licence used by many hotels to trade until 12pm and present entertainment (albeit a legal loop-hole) was to be abolished. This decision was made in complete ignorance of the crippling ramifications on a multi-million dollar industry which had grown up over the last five years presenting rock in the pubs. Mr. Walker was later to admit openly 4000 jobs were directly at stake. Mr. Walker made his original decision on the advice of a select committee which inquired into liquor trading hours. Not one shred of evidence came from anyone connected with the rock or hotel industry to this committee. A sad comment on our level of preparedness.

After two hastily convened meetings at the Capitol Theatre, a body called The Contemporary Music Industry Committee was set up. This was done so the industry could deal directly with the Government on this particular issue. It was felt by those at the Capitol meetings that the Musicians Union was not sufficiently in touch with the industry as a whole to be doing this work.

The committee won an immediate reprieve from Mr. Walker's department. Promises were given that the old 57A licences would not go until a 'viable alternative form of licence' had been devised for rock in the pubs.

Perhaps because of pressure from various individual work commitments, and the quite good line of communication the committee had established with Mr. Walker's office, people relaxed.

Again, crisis hit at the end of June 1980, when it became clear the 57A permits would not be renewed for the new financial year. There was no licence to replace them. Thus pubs presenting rock entertainment faced the prospect of closing at 11pm and not even having the scanty loophole of Section 57A of the old Liquor Act to charge an admission price at the door (on the pretence of providing a supper).

Many members of the old Contemporary Music Industry Committee, went into action again. After several days of dealing with a confused, intractable and divided bureaucracy and government, the political leaders managed to find a way through the faction fighting which left all egos intact. What basically happened was that pubs were made exempt from the provisions of the Theatres and Public Halls Act. This legislation requires people presenting entertainment anywhere in the state who are charging money for it to first get a Theatres and Public Halls licence. For various reasons, the relevant Minister, Services Minister Bill Crabtree, had refused to issue pubs with these licences. Perhaps Mr. Crabtree didn't believe the pubs could comply with the rather strict safety procedures and fire regulations provided for in the act. The problem was temporarily solved when Acting Premier Jack Ferguson announced pubs would be made exempt from the act's provisions. Thus, for the first time, pubs in NSW had the legal right to charge an admission price. We were promised a working party between Attorney-General's, Services and the police would be set up to devise a permanent licencing arrangement.

This has not happened, and is but one example of why the industry needs a more permanent representative lobby body working on its behalf. The industry lacked a recognised spokesman, it lacked credibility as everyone tried to say their piece, sometimes being ill-informed when they spoke.

The problems today

This legislative problem in the pubs is still to be solved. It cannot be solved for the good of everyone by just a few individuals. It needs the input of every facet of the industry. It then needs the authority and mandate to go after the Government and make the politicians keep their promises. As Don Chipp has said: "Let's keep the bastards honest." Unless we act quickly, we face the added burden of probably being stuck with the 11pm pub close permanently.

There are a host of other matters which need a swift, coherent, powerful response from the industry. For example, we believe a law has been drafted and is due to go through parliament soon which will literally make street posters in Sydney non-existent. This will be done by making the venue advertised on the poster liable to a $500 fine. If this is the case, an industry body might be able to work with the government, find out exactly what is planned, keep everyone informed, and possibly organise some form of alternative, e.g. an enormous billboard in each municipality specifically for rock'n'roll posters and advertising.

Another potential head-ache is the possibility of quite major changes to the tax laws. In New Zealand, the Government has recently introduced a flat 20 per cent tax rate, which the promoter is legally bound to take out of the performers pay every evening. It may not be all that long before some bureaucrat in the Tax Department thinks this is a wonderful idea for Australia. if we have an industry body we may be able to divert or deflect a body blow like this.

The other major immediate problem which faces live rock'n'roll is the negative attitude of local councils. This has led to many outdoor shows being cancelled. Again, a strong representative body may be able to go in to bat on behalf of promoters unreasonably refused access to outdoor venues.

If the manufacturers, retailers and every other industry group in Australia can have their lobby groups, their representative bodies, it's time the rock industry started thinking about a broadly-based, representative and funded body.

The immediate problems facing the pub music industry in NSW affect *every* part of the music industry. Without good new bands there are no signings. Without local product, our airwaves will sound decidedly sick.

It is a fact the music industry has emerged from infancy in the sixties to what is now a very major, multi-million dollar industry. Mr. Walker acknowledged this in a media release dated July 1, 1980: "Australia's entertainment industry has become one of the most viable in the world today." The Government knows unless they are prepared to listen and be sympathetic to a few of our problems it won't always remain that way. And we as an industry should realise we now have the chance to get that little bit of naked political clout and credibility we need to make sure the industry continues to grow.

Anthony O'Grady

RAM ROCK POLL

Poll Guide

Categories and winners are in bold type. Last year's winners (where applicable) are in italics at the end of each category. Tied place getters that could not be separated, even after a recount, are separated by a dash.

Tales from the Counting House

And it's a changing world in which we live. Just about *no one* maintained from last year. Prominent absentees from the top of the Oz lists this year are The Angels, who scored four firsts last year, and seven the year before. But you get the feeling that it's not so much a backlash, as punishing competition from the plethora of groups who came up with excellent albums and toured Oz aggressively while The Angels were overseas, cracking the American market. 1980 was the year of **Chisel** with *East*, it was also the year of **Split Enz** and *True Colours*, and **Flowers** with *Icehouse*, (whose rapid rise to prominence is one of the most dramatic in recent years). But it was **Chisel** who emerged astoundingly triumphant from the trio with an incredible total of *nine* first places. In addition **Mark Opitz**'s Best Producer score was surely much boosted by his involvement with *East*.

Dare we add a word of warning about being loved too much, all at once?

In the meantime, pass the kudos and rocket fuel around the winning circle - everyone in the group was awarded individual honours - Jim Barnes, Don Walker, Phil Small, Ian Moss and Steve Prestwich.

Yes, it's a changing cosmos alright, and nothing sums up the movement more readily than **Led Zeppelin**'s sudden disappearance from just about every category. Most astounding upheaval was, of course, *Led Zeppelin IV* being replaced by the **Sex Pistol**'s *Never Mind The Bollocks* in the All Time Fave Album category. If we could just get Sid and Johnny together again for the Oz tour...

Dare we say it, the All Time Fave Album list also points to a resurgence of recognition for Oz-made classic albums, with *Face To Face* and *Living In The '70s* both making welcome appearances. What else changed. Well, Annalisse Morrow moved The Oz Best Female Singer category into the '80s with a resounding victory.

And **Kiss** got a near unanimous thumbs down as Worst OS Band, Worst Tourists, and Non Event Of The Year. Hellfire and rocket-firing guitars, they even beat that hardy perennial Album Prices as Rip Off Of The Year.

But there are prejudices and prejudices. For instance maybe there *is* another more dismal personality than perennial winner Molly Meldrum in Australia. And it's sad to see **The Sherbs** continue to suffer from the Sherbet/Highway backlash by being voted Worst Oz Group. They aren't but it seems many voted on the basis that an old image can keep you down forever.

Back to the overseas selections, and the two imports who came through most strongly are **The Police** and **David Bowie.** Sounds good enough for a double bill concert to us, *indoors* of course.

Another OS tourist to make a strong showing was **The Cure**, while **XTC** held on to their third place from last year. **The Jam** and **The Clash** also scored well in several sections considering their low exposure in Oz.

Debbie Harry lost her Best Vocalist title to **Kate Bush,** but retained Sex Object. **Andy Summers** makes a strange equal first bedfellow with **Jimmy Page** in the Guitar section. Bowie and Sting fought it out for Best Vocalist, with David pulling ahead in the final lap.

What more can we say except this year's poll pulled in nearly twice the entries of last year, and if you find a dislocated finger around the traps of Darlinghurst it probably belongs to Greg, Kent, Elly or Samantha who did the bulk of the counting. So here they are, *your* lists. Enjoy, ingest, settle arguments, start new ones.

Anthony O'Grady

Your Own Flesh and Blood

TOP OZ GROUP

Chisel (Pic: Mark Hinchliffe)

COLD CHISEL
Flowers
Angels
Split Enz
Australian Crawl
Midnight Oil
(Cold Chisel/Angels)

BEST FEMALE SINGER

Annalisse (Pic: Ian Greene)

ANNALISSE MORROW
Sharon O'Neill
Lynda Nutter
Renee Geyer
(Renee Geyer)

BEST MALE SINGER

JIMMY BARNES
Doc Neeson
Iva Davies
James Reyne
(Doc Neeson)

BEST GUITARIST

IAN MOSS
Angus Young
Kevin Borich
Rick Brewster
(Kevin Borich)

BEST KEYBOARDIST

DON WALKER
Eddie Rayner
Anthony Smith
Murray Burns/Andrew Duffield/ Greedy Smith
(Don Walker)

BEST BASS PLAYER

PHIL SMALL
Chris Bailey
Keith Welsh
Annalisse Morrow
(Chris Bailey)

BEST DRUMMER

ROB HIRST/STEVE PRESTWICH
Freddie Strauks
Buzz Throckman
John Lloyd
(John Annas)

BEST HORN PLAYER

JOE CAMILLERI
Wilbur Wilde
Bob Farrell/Kirk Pengilly
(Wilbur Wilde)

BEST OTHER INSTRUMENTALIST

Norman (Pic: Philp Morris)

NORMAN GUNSTON (Harmonica)
Noel Crombie (Spoons)
Rolf Harris (Wobble board)
(Norman Gunston)

BEST PRODUCER

MARK OPITZ
Cameron Allan
Vanda & Young
David Tickle
(Vanda & Young)

BEST SONGWRITER

DON WALKER
Iva Davies
Brewster/Neeson/Brewster
Tim & Neil Finn
(Don Walker)

BEST NEW GROUP

Flowers

FLOWERS
IN X S
Models
(Mi-Sex)

WORST GROUP

SHERBS
Dugites
Angels
(Sherbs)

RESULTS

International Flesh and Blood

TOP O/S GROUP

I think it's The Police (S. Fowler/LFI)

POLICE
Clash
Jam/Rolling Stones
Talking Heads/Led Zeppelin
(Led Zeppelin)

TOP INTERNATIONAL TOURISTS
POLICE
Cure
XTC
Elton John/Motels
(Graham Parker)

WORST INTERNATIONAL TOURIST
KISS
Village People
Romantics
(The Knack)

BEST FEMALE SINGER

Kate Bush (Pic: Adrian Boot/LFI)

Debbie Harry (Pic: Paul Cox/LFI)

KATE BUSH
Chrissie Hynde/Debbie Harry
Pat Benatar
(Debbie Harry)

BEST MALE SINGER
DAVID BOWIE
Sting
Bruce Springsteen
(Robert Plant)

BEST GUITARIST
ANDY SUMMERS/JIMMY PAGE
Pete Townshend/Keith Richard
Mark Knopfler
(Jimmy Page)

BEST KEYBOARDIST
ELTON JOHN
Brian Eno
Roy Bittan/Rick Wakeman
(John Paul Jones)

BEST BASS PLAYER
STING
Bruce Foxton
Tina Weymouth
(John Paul Jones)

BEST DRUMMER
STEWART COPELAND
John Bonham
Charlie Watts
(John Bonham)

BEST HORN PLAYER
CLARENCE CLEMMONS
Lee Thompson
Andy Mackay
(Clarence Clemmons)

BEST OTHER INSTRUMENTALIST
IAN ANDERSON (Flute)
Ray Cooper (Percussion)
Bruce Springsteen (Harmonica)
(Ian Anderson)

BEST PRODUCER
BRIAN ENO
Nigel Gray
Mike Chapman/Nick Lowe
(Jimmy Page)

BEST SONGWRITER
DAVID BOWIE
Bruce Springsteen
Sting
(Page/Plant)

BEST NEW GROUP
UB40
Pretenders
Dead Kennedys/Madness
(Police)

WORST GROUP
KISS
Village People
Abba
(Racey)

The Record Rack

TOP ALBUMS
EAST
Icehouse
True Colours
(In Through The Out Door)

TOP SINGLES

Dat Ol' Scary Monster

ASHES TO ASHES
I Got You
Cheap Wine
(I Don't Like Mondays)

BEST OZ ALBUM
EAST
Icehouse
True Colours
(No Exit)

BEST OZ SINGLE
CAN'T HELP MYSELF
I Got You
Cheap Wine
(Computer Games)

BEST ALBUM THAT NEVER MADE THE CHARTS
SETTING SONS - THE JAM
Hot For The Orient - Skyhooks
Espresso Bongo - Mental As Anything/
Travelogue - The Human League
(It's Alive - The Ramones)

FAVE ALBUMS OF ALL TIME
NEVER MIND THE BOLLOCKS
Face To Face
Living In The '70s/Reggatta De Blanc
(Stairway To Heaven)

Sundries

EVENT OF THE YEAR

John Lennon

JOHN LENNON'S DEATH
Police Tour
Kiss Tour
(2SM Concert of the Decade)

NON-EVENT OF THE YEAR
KISS TOUR
Federal Elections
TV Week/Countdown Rock Awards
(The Ramones Tour)

RIPOFF OF THE YEAR
KISS
Album Prices
Federal Elections
(Album Prices)

OUTRAGEOUSLY OVER-THE-TOP PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR
NORMAN GUNSTON
Bette Midler
Joylene Hairmouth
(Iggy Pop)

MOST DISMAL PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR
IAN MELDRUM
Malcolm Fraser
Gary Numan
(Ian Meldrum)

ALBUM COVER OF THE YEAR
EAST
Icehouse
Scary Monsters
(In Through The Out Door)

FASHION OF THE YEAR
MOD
White Sandshoes
Short Hair
(Badges)

SEX OBJECT OF THE YEAR
DEBBIE HARRY
Kate Bush
Sting/Pat Benatar
(Debbie Harry)

RADIO ROCK JOCK OF THE YEAR
George Wayne/Doug Mulray (2JJJ)
Lee Simon (3EON)
Michael Finucan (4ZZZ)
There were no clear winners in SA and WA and Tasmania did not believe that they had a rock jock...

BEST MOVIE
LIFE OF BRIAN
The Rose
Quadrophenia
(Life Of Brian)

TV SHOW OF THE YEAR
NIGHTMOVES
Countdown
Fawlty Towers
(Nightmoves)

BEST ROCK FILM CLIP OF THE YEAR
ASHES TO ASHES
Face The Day
Babooshka

WORD OF THE YEAR
FUCK
(Fuck)

Congratulations Chisel

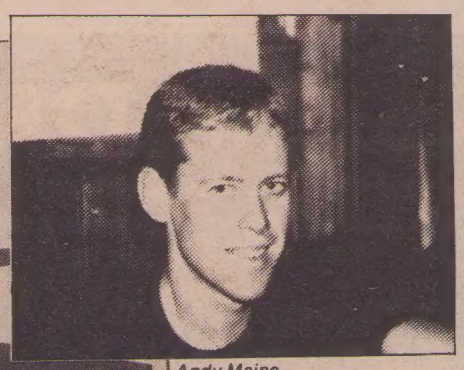
"Death of Marat" by Jacques-Louis David, c 1794. By courtesy of Musee du Chateau, Versailles.

see you in the Swingshift

wea

APPROVED Goodtimes ADVISORY COUNCIL

Fast Forward wrapper



Andy Maine

Bruce Milne

(READ IT WITH YOUR EARS)

M ag a zine (From Arabic, *makhazin)*. A place where goods are stored or displayed . . .

Or something you leaf through at the dentist. Most of us think of periodicals containing articles, stories, pictures or other features as something involving marks on paper. If you heard there was a new rock mag out, you'd look on the newsagent racks for something with a famous face wrapped round a microphone on the cover.

In which case you might miss **Fast Forward.** Because Fast Forward is a 'cassette magazine': a C40 tape with interviews, music, and the editorial comment of Bruce Milne and Andrew Maine - "two of Melbourne's most exciting, available and attractive young bachelors-about-town". Or, in a slightly more serious vein, two people who see no reason why they shouldn't store and display their goods on a magnetic field rather than a printed page.

"Bruce was involved with setting up a fanzine called Pulp Magazine," says Andy over the phone. "That was a long time ago. Before Roadrunner." We ponder such vast antiquity.

"He worked for Roadrunner too, for a while, then left; he now works for Missing Link Records, and also has his own label, Au Go Go". *(See Independent Record Co. feature, Issue 140.)*

"He wanted to start another paper - he was a bit . . . thing about Roadrunner, thought it had lost its edge, didn't cater for the market which it was started for."

Andy, like Bruce, had the experience of starting his own paper (Dilettante, an arts college enterprise). He was out of a job: the two decided to do the Labour of Love one more time, and give Australia the rock mag it needs rather than deserves.

"As we were organising it, we got hold of this really cheap bulk tape deal. We thought we'd give away recordings with the paper . . . then we thought, 'Well, bugger the paper - we'll put the whole thing on cassette'."

Thus, late last year, Fast Forward No. 1 started trickling out into the independent record shops. "We only did about 200," says Andy cheerfully, "but the beauty of it is that you can always dub off some more." Whereas print media face big costs setting up another press run.

Other relative production advantages are (1) Instant interviews - no transcription, (2) Instant interface - no typesetting, layout, expensive printing technology. Just prepare a master tape, then run it through a multi-dubbing machine. ("Which, unfortunately, isn't totally cheap," regrets Andy.)

When you compare the merits for the paying public, the comparison gets a little more complicated.

Visual scanning is much faster than aural: you can't leaf through a cassette for the particular article or a general impression. What you gain in perception of a person's character through the sound of their voice, you lose through no pix.

With tape, nobody can claim they were misquoted; on the other hand, editing is a mercy for some . . .

One clear plus for a cassette *music* magazine is obvious: the music can speak for itself, there's no brain-racking for the often inadequate description. Fast Forward 1 has tracks from Sydney's Pel Mel, Melbourne's The Editions and The Informatics, and Perth's Teenyweenys, while No. 2 features numbers from The Birthday Party, Vital Vortex and Graham Pitt. None have been released, and the recording quality is fair to good; apart from the dread 'collectors piece' value, it's a unique sampler that could pay for itself in telling you who to spend your bucks on when they come to town.

Of course, the price of $3.50 is fairly high compared to conventional magazines. *(And we were panicking about having to go to 85 cents!)* Andy hopes that they might get it down a bit, and as he points out, you have purchased a cassette which you can wipe and re-record. But he and Bruce realise that the audience probably won't be massive: "We'd like to get it up to about a thousand an issue, but that'll take a long time . . ."

As well, their interest doesn't lie in the popular consumer market. "We're not interested in putting out music which is already available on vinyl - unless it has some rare value, and we had access to it which other people couldn't get . . . We're not interested in most of the mainstream stuff, unless we feel it has something new and vital to offer, and is not just part of the music business machine . . ." Heaven forbid, I hear it's nasty in there!

Nor do they want Fast Forward to become a virtual record label - even for the progressive and the experimental. So far, for instance, they've resisted suggestions that they put all the music on one side, with all the interviews and commentary on the other, although Andy confesses that he is tempted to make some concessions to that by running two or three tracks together.

Fast Forward is definitely a first and only in Oz: overseas music papers have recently mentioned a few vaguely similar enterprises in England and Europe, but Bruce and Andy haven't heard any. "And we haven't even touched the potential areas it opens up," says Andy, with happy awe. "There's all sorts of things which don't have any translation from the print media - sound collages, for instance . . ." The ear boggles.

But the mind says, Why Not? If you feel equally new, brave and adventurous, and you can't find Fast Forward in a Quality Independent Record Store near You, leave in disgust and send $3.50 plus 50 cents for postage to Fast Forward, P.O. Box 5159 AA, GPO Melbourne, 3000.

Greg Taylor

Did somebody hear a voice?

FAMILY VOICES

"We're looking for strength in songs," said Barry Lewis, lead guitarist and vocalist for Sydney band Voices. His hands gripped the wheel a little tighter and his eyes stayed on his subject a little more than was safe as the old Fiat lumbered through Sydney. *(Destination:* War & Peace Disco, Parramatta. *Object:* support gig for The Numbers. *Aim:* win over a few more people to the subtle craft of Voices.)

For a second a disarming shy smile punctuated the statement. As if to say: 'Don't worry, I'm not really obsessed.' But Barry Lewis is very serious about success, or at least recognition.

From the back seat, guitarist and vocalist Frank Lewis fully endorsed his younger brother's faith. "Songs are where it's at," he said quietly, but persistently. "If you have the right song - no matter what you do live - you go to the top." (A formula that worked briefly for Frank in 1970. He had a minor Sydney Top 40 hit before the record ban knocked it on the head.)

So far Voices aren't at the top. Anywhere but. Their present gigging around Sydney consists of a hard slog of support spots. Starting at about eight o'clock each night and playing a 75 minute set to an almost empty hotel. If the band are lucky, the big crowds attracted by the headliners will catch the last three or four songs.

Given this situation it is not surprising that the band (rounded out by another brother Steve Lewis on bass and drummer Robert Spark) are rather tentative about audience response. They rarely see a large one.

"When the band started about 15 months ago," said Frank Lewis, "we got trapped in trying to discover what audiences wanted. We were trying to write songs to fit this vague idea of the general public's taste. It was great to find out that they really liked *our* songs, the ones we were proud of. We've got a lot of confidence from that."

The prior lack of confidence is reflected in an episode which occurred late in 1979. As related by Barry Lewis: "A friend of the band, Margaret White, who is now our manager, was going to England in her work as a clothes designer. We gave Margaret a rough demo of a few songs the band had done and asked her to take them around the record companies while she was there. It turned out that EMI were very interested and they wanted to do a recording deal with us through Chrysalis.

"We were pretty blown out. Why was a big international record company like them interested in a little band from the other side of the world who'd only been together a couple of months?

"We didn't follow it up. We just took it more as a vote of confidence and kept at writing songs and playing around Sydney."

This endless gigging has added an extra dimension to Frank and Barry Lewis' previously private songwriting. Playing the same song every night results in you either deriving a great deal of enjoyment from it or quickly growing to detest it.

"Over the last ten months it has been trial and error," related Barry. "We've been trying to find the feels that we want to keep playing. I don't mean a quiet groove or anything like that. But songs which are - are . . . catchy, I guess. They don't lose that power to grab you however often you play or hear them."

Such a rigorous attention to their craft involves frequent conferences about Voices' song bracket. Their manager related how at one recent ruthless meeting the band decided they only really liked one of their songs - Barry Lewis' *Broken Man* (which is undoubtedly the band's most striking number). The gloom was dissipated by the thrill of trying out three new songs from Barry at rehearsal.

The quiet determination of Voices remains. Despite the constant gigging and little money (a solvency problem has arisen now that the band members have virtually exhausted their personal savings), which means they are having trouble hiring a decent road crew, there is the consolation that they are not in debt (as yet) and most importantly there is the dangling carrot of their recording contract with Deluxe. So far this has yielded one single, *I Think I'll Go Mad,* and they hope to release another single and record an album in February.

As evidenced in their live show, Voices are finding the songs to take them to the top. At present they have roughly eight which are worthy of respect.

Apart from the two mentioned earlier, others to stand out are *Live Your Life Away, Pictures Of You* and *Another Night Alone* - any one of which would make a good single. The band present them in a very disciplined and unpretentious style, which is superficially reminiscent of English 'power pop'. But Voices have their own sound built around an energetic rhythm section and simple staccato guitars.

What they do lack is confidence. Since there are no natural extroverts in the band, they miss the attack they should have in performance. Another more forceful guitarist would aid them immeasurably.

But with determination they will make it. Providing of course that they don't split up along the way, in a year a lot more people should know about Voices. Because they are family, determination is one aspect where the band has an advantage.

After the gig at Parramatta, Barry exuberantly explained the Lewis creed: "It's good that we're brothers, because we might go off our heads at each other, but we'd never think of leaving and breaking up the band. No way."

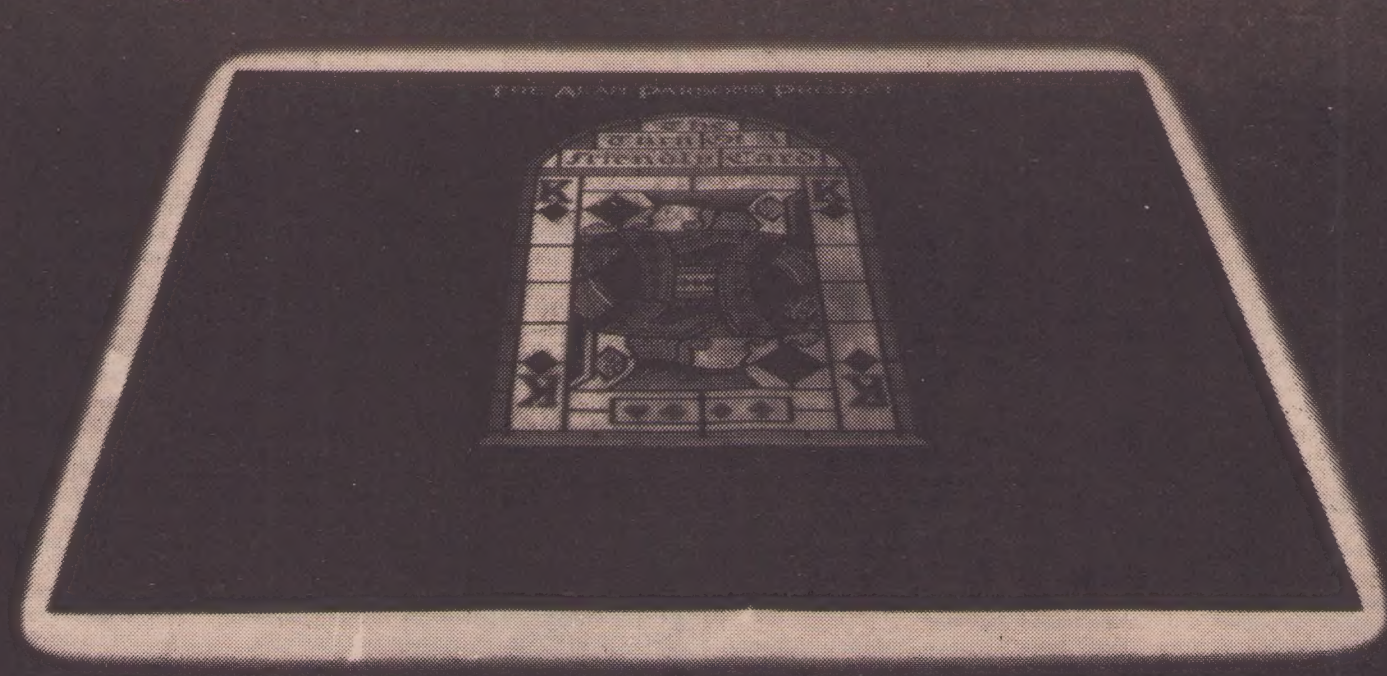
For the first time Barry Lewis truly radiated confidence. It and Voices are slowly growing.

Kent Goddard

THE ALAN PARSONS PROJECT

THE TURN OF A FRIENDLY CARD

**They've never appeared on stage,
few people know what they look like,
yet they've sold almost seven million records.**



MUSIC BEYOND
THE STATE OF THE ART

37241

ARISTA

RECORDS AND TAPES

Strange Tactics (Pic: Stephen Hockney)

TACTICAL TRIUMPHS

CLINTON WALKER has been slowly won over by TACTICS - with the release of their debut album, *My Houdini*, he capitulates in foaming admiration.

According to the tourist brochures, the Rocks area of Sydney, down by Circular Quay, is 'the Birthplace of Australia'. It's perhaps ironic, then, that when Tactics made a return to live appearances recently, after a layoff of some months, it was at the Governors Pleasure, a pub in the Rocks. Because Tactics are a band aware of their heritage, a band Australia and only Australia could have produced . . .

In a room with rows of benches and brick walls like an old church, Tactics begin their set with *Long Story*, a song from their debut album, *My Houdini*, that they've never before played live. And it's quite superb. David Studdert tells *'a long story along familiar lines where a mirror's held up against a real life'*; that *'there are certain ways things can be resolved, certain ways in certain lives'*.

Studdert jerks like a marionette run amok, arms and legs flailing, his voice a shrill, staccato howl, his guitar a frantic thrash that bears only passing resemblance to the reggae that's influenced him.

Angus Douglas is Tactics' *lead* guitarist; his more controlled, fluid lines offset Studdert's dementia. Pianist Ingrid Spielman adds dollops of colour, while the Geoff Marsh/Robert Whittle rhythm-section provides rock-steady support - Marsh with his protruding bass lines, 'Rover' Whittle with his strong, certain drumming.

Even though Tactics' influences are distinct - the Velvet Underground, Burning Spear, Neil Young, early Talking Heads, Love, Television, Roxy Music - they've been thoroughly assimilated and subsequently transcended; Tactics have created a sound of their own, an urgent, insistent sound without likeness in Australia or anywhere else in the world.

At the Governors Pleasure Tactics played a handful of new songs - *Robbe-Grillet, Pulling In The Reins, Quality Of A Holiday* (which aren't on the album) - as well as *Long Story* and lots of Tactics standards - *National Health, China Watcher, Buried Country, Outdoors* (some on the album, some not). The gig was to coincide with the release of *My Houdini*, which comes after three years of Tactics.

David Studdert formed the band in Canberra late in 1977. Of an Army family, Studdert had lived in Europe and America, as well as different parts of Australia, before he arrived in Canberra.

"I just wanted to do something," he said. ". . . I just wanted to do something apart from the 9-to-5. I mean, it's as banal as that.

"'Rover' was an old hippie, y'know. And we sorta taught him to drum. And, like, the bass player had never played before." At that stage a quartet, only Angus Douglas had had any previous experience, playing with a high school band or two. "When I started writing songs," Studdert continued, "I didn't want to learn how to play 12-bar, 'cos everybody else played 12-bar. I just figured that the only way to do something different was to sit down, without going through all this shit, just sit down and do what you want to do."

Tactics gigged in Canberra, until their 'big break' came when they supported the Thought Criminals, in mid '78. Impressed by the band, the Thoughties invited Tactics to visit Sydney. By early '79, Tactics had assumed permanent residence in the Harbour City, and were gigging regularly.

I hated them! I thought they sounded like a Buzzcocks single at 78.

But their reputation grew, and I kept going back, and slowly found myself being converted. Nowadays I consider Tactics alongside the Birthday Party, Laughing Clowns, the Go Betweens, You go Klang (formerly Whirlywirld) and Equal Local as one of the finest young bands in Australia.

Even though David Studdert was at pains to point out that Tactics operate very democratically, it is his vision that really propels the band. He writes all of Tactics' songs, and they're some of the best, most *Australian* songs I've heard since . . . well, I don't think Australian rock'n'roll has ever had a writer like Studdert. People call Richard Clapton an outstanding(ly) Australian singer-songwriter; and yet look at his imagery - it's all lines like *'There's gonna be a showdown'*. That's Australian?! If Richard Clapton does in fact perceive anything of 'the Australian condition', it's not in our language. On the other side of success, David Studdert writes like an Australian.

Studdert's songs capture the atmosphere and images of life in this country, where our short, brutal heritage is never far away, like the aural equivalent of a Sidney Nolan painting. But then they're not parochial - Studdert writes so well as to make his intentions clear to anyone, Australian or otherwise.

"Without getting too arty-farty or intellectual about it," Studdert began, "there's two sorts of mainstreams of the way people write, right. There's the Romantic, which is subjective, and particular, and there's the Classical, which is general and . . . objective, and I'd rather write like that.

"You take the Aborigines," Studdert seemed to be flying off at a tangent, "the way they view their society is completely different to the way we do ours. They glorified ordinary things, and they were very understated lyrics, and they were very plain, simple, descriptive lyrics. And, like, I would rather write those sort of songs than . . ."

The telephone interrupts Studdert's train of thought . . .

As a quartet Tactics released two platters - the *Long Weekend* EP (on their own Folding Chair label) and the *Outdoors/Hole In My Life* single (on Doublethink, given away free at gigs). It was when Ingrid Spielman joined the band, early last year, that they began work on *My Houdini*. Nearly eight months later they'd finished. I asked Studdert if he thought all the time in the studio was well spent.

"Yeah, because none of us knew what we were doing. I mean, it's the only way you can overcome your lack of experience in a studio. We originally planned it for five days . . ."

The album was recorded mainly at Basilisk Studios in Sydney, where owner/engineer Martin Bishop allowed the band much free time. "It was the sort of situation where we could spend four hours getting a guitar sound," Studdert said, "and if we didn't like it we could go back and fix it up. And that was good, because I like that idea, of *crafting* everything."

Indeed, Tactics make not a particularly *emotional* music; rather, it's a 'journalistic' sort of music. *My Houdini* culls 10 songs from Studdert's catalogue of over 50 (two of which have previously been released - *Buried Country* and *Outdoors)*, and happily the time in the studio *was* well spent - *My Houdini* is one of the most impressive Australian debut albums released in recent years. It captures Tactics in all their intricate detail, and although theirs is a unique sound it's not inaccessible - melodies, if understated, are plentiful, and the rhythm is to be danced to.

I remark to Studdert that the overriding impression the album made upon me was one of *entrapment*.

"It comes from living in Canberra," he replied matter-of-factly. "A lot of those songs were written in Canberra. And, like, Canberra's just a diabolical place, it's extremely claustrophobic.

"In Canberra, the difference between what Australia really is and what Canberra is is really obvious. It's also obvious in Sydney, but in Canberra it's really artificial - like, they want to make everything green, so they have to water the grass all the time. That's pigshit! I mean, Canberra is a very apt capital for the country; in a hell of a lot of ways it does represent what Australia is - the idea of one culture coming out to this country and forcefully asserting itself upon the country, despite what the country's like."

So how do you validate your own existence here?

"I don't really know; that's what I'm trying to work out."

Whether or not a widespread Australian audience will, or rather *can*, accept Tactics' determination to face our failings remains to be seen.

"If they're frightened to see that, or they're upset by it, then that's their fault," Studdert said. "I don't care.

"I mean, I don't care about 'success', what I care about is whether or not it's on our own terms.

"Because basically I never wanted to judge myself by rock'n'roll standards, 'cos I think they're so fucking low. I mean, ultimately, in this business, everything is such bullshit, the only person you can hope to satisfy is yourself."

But Tactics satisfied a near-full-house at the Governors Pleasure, and if they can do that they can do the same for you.

Clinton Walker

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Apres gig Sherbs - Harvey, Garth, Daryl, Alan and Tony (Pic: Ian Greene)

It really does feel like starting all over again

THE SHERBS are a promising new band with a complicated and lengthy past history. ANTHONY O'GRADY investigates the status quo.

The gig has finished, The Sherbs are in their gra...-scrawled dressing room, and the agent who'd booked the gig is lost for words, almost.

"You're *what?*" he asks.

"Well, why not?" says Daryl Braithwaite, pulling on a pair of running shorts. "I can do my daily run and put up posters at the same time."

The agent watches him pick up a roll of posters and jog out the door. Naturally he's thinking of all the times when, if Daryl wanted to go anywhere, a chauffered limosine was waiting at the door. But then again, that timewarp trap isn't Daryl's problem. He really is enjoying the slap of sandshoes on the night-cooled pavement, the tang of the pale night breeze. He is whistling softly as he tucks the posters more firmly under his arm. The posters, naturally, advertise The Sherbs next gig.

Do you know what?" says the girl, elbows leaned on the hotel lounge table, hands jabbing the air for emphasis, "they've *grown up*. I mean, they've *really* grown up. They used to be pretty and now they're real . . . you know what I mean?"

Her boyfriend juggles two drinks through the crowd on the dancefloor, almost reaches the table safely, but is undone by an inadvertant flying elbow. The drinks spill, one of them over the girl's dress.

"Oh Michael," she says with dismay.

"Well," says Michael, "it's them, isn't it, they're having too good a time."

A good time is the motif for most Sherbs gigs these days. You'll find them on the smaller pub and club circuit, usually playing two sets a night and spreading an uncommonly good-time vibe. Nothing wild, frenzied. The Sherbs are not an excitement, macho-in-extremis band like Midnight Oil. They don't pummel the crowd into an orgy on surges of classically constructed melodies, with a steady finger on the gut rock pulse of rhythms - the sort that get your feet tapping with the *thummmmp!* of the bass drum, and your fingers weaving a response to the *chugga-chugga* of the bass. The band's enjoyment of playing is relaxed, a steady long-term pleasure. The audience vibe is relaxed, trustful. The Sherbs have played here quite a few times and the regulars know how the ride goes. They feel *warmly* to the band. When The Sherbs finish, there's a sheen of sweaty friendliness in the air. It feels almost like a party.

"When I book The Sherbs into a new gig," says the agent, "I know it's going to take two shows before you know how they're going to do. The first is for people to come along and lose their idea of the old Sherbet. The second time is for them to come along because they like what *The Sherbs* do."

To be sure there are people who just won't let go of that old Sherbet glamour. You see them at nearly every small suburban pub gig, crowding at the foot of the 12-foot stages, reliving the view from the bottom of the 40-foot Hordern Pavilion podium. A smile from Daryl lights their faces with joy. A word with Alan or Garth after the set is a wish fulfilled. And there's the opposite extreme, people who deny the band any escape from the timewarp. Who have forever in their mind an image of Sherbet as a pretentious posse of popstars, and who gloat at their current reduced circumstances.

But The Sherbs themselves are prisoners of no timewarp and fragmented images of the past are not what they see when they look into the crowds at the pubs. They see an impossibly small number of people enjoying the music. Impossibly small because the number of people Sherbet play to a week nowadays, is generally not enough to cover the cost of hiring equipment and its transport. But the band *has* to play - it ceases to exist if it doesn't. That's the definition.

"It's just that we all feel *this* band has something within it, that's only now slowly coming out," says Garth Porter. "There's this spark there and if we didn't feel it we wouldn't be doing this . . . because this sort of working life would be impossible to carry through without that. We just feel we have a future as a band . . . that one day we will do something that really expresses what's inside us, because I don't think we've anything like realised our potential yet."

It's been a long and strangely twisted road that stretches to where The Sherbs stand today. It's unlikely you're totally unfamiliar with their rise and fall as '70s chartbusters. If so, reference books and articles abound in profusion. It's not that The Sherbs today deny their history, they've simply packed it away in an attic of the mind and let it moulder ignored. Their memories of the time are not as vivid as those who were onlookers.

"Look," says Garth, "I was *there*, and that just isn't the way it happened." He is talking about a frank *Penthouse* article by Glenn A. Baker that revives the days of Sherbetmania, with a fervent recollection of the glamour and laissez faire extravagance of those days.

"Garth," says his wife Mary, "it mightn't have *seemed* that way on the inside; but looking in from the outside, that's almost what it was like."

Garth shakes his head, puzzled. "But," he says, "if I'd really thought *that* was the sort of life I was leading, I would have given up."

But of course, like everyone, The Sherbs are a product of their own history. Without the pop power trips, the high stake financial winnings, and the subsequent savage backlash, there would have been no re-self discovery and reformation of The Sherbs, and no basis of inspiration for the songs on *The Skill* album.

"When Sherbet finished, I hated, loathed, despised everything to do with playing in a band. I felt . . . at last I've got to try something on my own."

But after Garth had spent a year of experimenting with production, writing jingles, writing songs for others, and untangling Sherbet's financial affairs, came the conviction that music only started to live for him when it was played with a band. And the band slowly came together. Garth had been playing with Tony Mitchell, and Alan Sandow and Harvey James droppeu around for a few practices. And they finally met up with Daryl Braithwaite again, who, at that stage had two choices - stay in America and work with enough session musicians and songwriters till he found a viable solo career there, or accept anyone of many offers to become a club/TV entertainer back in Australia.

But it's a funny thing about Daryl Braithwaite - his past image as King of Pop and his clean, warm smile always suggested he was the logical successor to Johnny Farnham as a family entertainer, but he's never really functioned comfortably outside a band context. Just doesn't feel comfortable any other way.

So that's how The Sherbs came about, and the songs on *The Skill* album are what they've built over the past year. They are songs of determination, songs that soar with power and strong shouts of melody. They are uplifting songs because they embody a philosophy of belief in self and enjoyment in the challenge of doing what you do better next time.

I believe something will happen with this band," says Garth Porter. "Maybe not in this country, unfortunately . . . almost certainly not in this country," he says, looking around the loungeroom sized bar the band has just played. "But I think there is a future. The aim is not to make a million dollars . . . the aim is to stick together . . . to produce another album . . . to get better."

Earlier that day, Atco Records in America had announced they'd signed The Sherbs on the strength of *The Skill*. The news turned up on routine telex from Atco to their Australian distributors. "We took a vow that none of us would announce it to anyone, just in case the daily papers picked it up with another 'Pop Groups Gets $1 Mil. Deal' headline," says Garth. "Not that it is a big advance, but it is the deal we wanted, because the company didn't want to sign us for what they hoped would be a hit single from the album. They wanted the *album*. That was everything to us.

"We wanted someone who'd say 'We don't care if it's got a hit single on it or not, we like the album'. It's a cheeky attitude, but Atco is the sort of company who believes in thinking like that. In America they've got Pete Townshend and Bryan Ferry for instance, because they believe in people who are trying to express something from within themselves, rather than trying to fit neatly into the mainstream."

TOM ROBINSON

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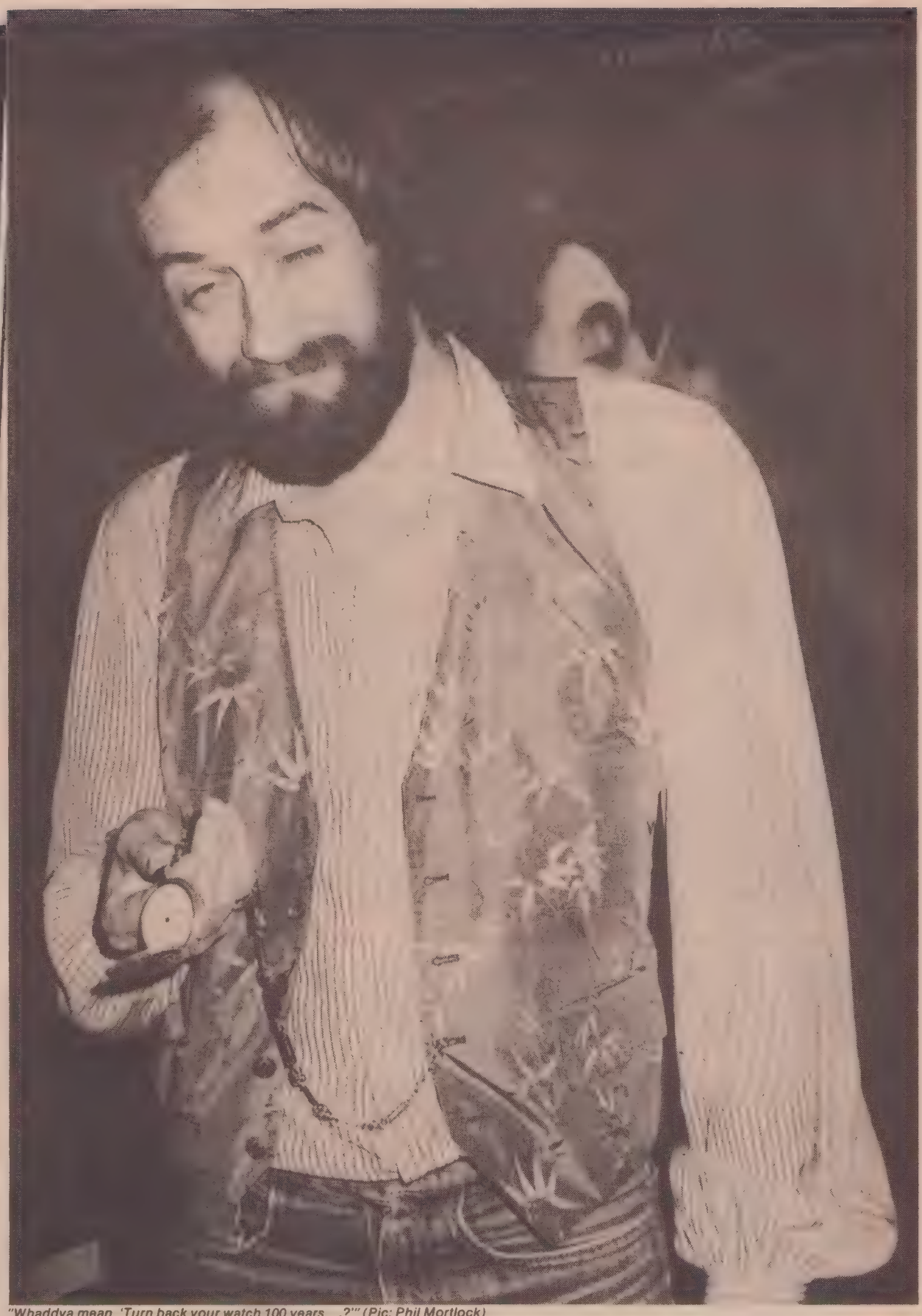


"Whaddya mean, 'Turn back your watch 100 years...?'" (Pic: Phil Mortlock)

Mick Fleetwood, property owner and noveau Oz resident is sitting in a plush armchair in the plush offices of his Australian record company. One of the reasons the office is plush is Mick Fleetwood, or more precisely, the mammoth number of records his band Fleetwood Mac have sold.

Mick's property is down the road a bit from the record company offices, about 70kms out of Sydney in Mittagong. It's a 700 hectare ranch curled around what is believed to be a comfortable enough mansion, and the whole thing is believed to have cost close to a million dollars. They say riches remove and great riches remove even further but Mick says *he* still feels part of the human race.

"I don't have any problems walking around," he is saying to a radio station interviewer on the phone. "I don't have any problem talking to people either."

He is asked about John McVie *(bass player for F. Mac)* being busted for possession of guns, contraband, cash and drugs. "I just can't get very worried about it at the moment," says Mick. The guns he says were for the protection of McVie's ocean travelling cruiser (pirates on the high seas are something fierce these days), the cash was an oversight, and the drugs had been sent unsolicited through the mail. "It's amazing what some people will do to strike up an acquaintance," says Mick, putting his finger on one of the main differences between a superstar rock musician and the rest of homo sapiens.

But still, in a lot of ways they're no different to everyone else. "I'm moving house slowly," says Mick. "That's why I'm here now... to look at the place firstly, because I haven't even seen it properly yet. Then I have to arrange for stuff to be shipped over from America. I mean, I've already sold up there and all my stuff is sitting in storage. So I'm just taking it slow and easy... just doing the things everyone does when they move house."

But it appears he won't be in Oz very much at all in 1981. His first project is to record a solo album in Africa, then he's back in America to start recording a new Fleetwood Mac album in April. And that could take the rest of the year, considering the mammoth sessions that went into *Rumours* and *Tusk*.

"I'm a great believer in putting money back into your craft," he says. "Once we had the money, we spent a lot of it in the recording studio. Obviously we *could* make albums quicker, for less money, but that's not how the band operates. We like to experiment, to explore left field. Sometimes it works out and sometimes it doesn't. But we'd never have known if we hadn't tried."

He puts down the phone, stands up, stretches, wobbles his lean cheeks, and goes *'AAAAARRRRGGGGGGGH!'*

"As if that wasn't enough," says the friendly record company PR person, "this is Anthony O'Grady from RAM magazine."

"I had the tape recorder on while you were talking on the phone," I reveal shyly, "because I figure a lot of people would be asking you the same questions today."

"That's right," agrees Mick. "But I don't mind, that's why I'm here."

One of the more interesting rumours of why he is here is that Fleetwood is convinced America is on the verge of a holocaust, and he's decided Australia is the best place to be while the other side of the world deals with approaching Armageddon. Interestingly enough Mick doesn't straight out deny this, but he doesn't confirm it either.

"I was just never too happy there, so I'd decided to move anyway. I could have ended up in Southern Ireland, but I saw here and decided to make a go of it here.

"Don't get me wrong, I like America, and I like Americans, but I've given it a good bash and lived there for six years and now I've got a choice... it's just the way it goes... whatever you think can happen..." he trails off.

"Mind you," he returns, "Christine *(McVie, keyboards and vocals for F. Mac)* loves it in Los Angeles and has no intention of ever moving. But I just felt like moving. I don't know anyone here, but if I can't make a few new friends, that would be pretty pitiful."

Well, with 700 acres around the front door, it's a long trek for a neighbour to borrow the odd cup of sugar.

"Everyone mentions this cup of sugar," screams Mick collapsing with laughter. *"Christ!* What are they trying to do with me, I'm a *diabetic!"*

When Mick Fleetwood talks about his solo album his eyes brighten with excitement and his words smoke with passion.

"Firstly, I go to Africa and work with African drummers there. Then I'll take the tapes back to America and we'll have all sorts of things happening - wild string arrangements, orchestral embellishments... I hope it will be exciting, it will probably be very different at least. My main obsession has always been to do this very technical and experimental thing and get people to hear it as something *natural.*

"Like, African drum patterns are highly technical. They're monsters... *monsters!* But they're easy to listen to. Your body reacts to them naturally, and your brain doesn't have to interpret them as split-time multiple-accented beats."

Some highly evolved jazz musos have explored African rhythms but Fleetwood has no love for highly evolved jazz.

"They forget the natural element, jazz has lost that fundamental essence. I don't want to play by charts, I don't want to be clever-clever. I want to retain that simplicity of feel."

Bowie, I say, took a trip to Africa and immersed himself in the rhythms, just prior to his '78 Oz tour.

"Yes," says Fleetwood dourly, "and more power to him. When I was in Africa setting up the album, a friend of his was over there with a tape recorder too. The thing is though, I don't want to rip these people off. The music, sometimes, is *everything* they've got, and Fleetwood Mac's lawyer is over there now talking to the people about copyright laws, explaining them and making sure they realise the monetary value of their own heritage.

"I'm talking about the ethics of the thing now. It's great to use influences, everyone does. But I also want to put something back."

I point to ex-Cream drumming legend, Ginger Baker's experiments with tribal rhythms in Nigeria, and Mick sighs:

"I don't know what Ginger's doing now. Frankly I don't know how he's still walking around. He's somewhat, uh, *fossilised* these days I suspect. I know he took a band around Africa and played the most amazing things, but I really think he missed the point. You can't commit career suicide by doing something that's good in essence but which the vast majority of people just can't understand. I don't want to do something that's completely off the wall. I want to help preserve something by capturing the feel, and then dressing it with orchestrations."

And we talk about Fleetwood Mac's superstar career, or more particularly, the drop in sales from the multi-multi-million selling *Rumours* to the mere multi-million selling *Tusk.*

"We're not idiots," says Mick. "If we'd wanted, we could have re-created *Rumours.* Instead we did something we wanted to do. I don't think *Tusk* is a failure, I think it will stand the test of time. For instance Chicago's albums sounded the same for so many years and while most were successful, I think that sort of success is boring.

"There has to be a *growth* process. You can't be so rigid as to say *'Gee if we don't do those 'Rumours'-type harmonies again, the record buying public won't...'*

"On the other hand we were aware of the risk, but we did it, and we felt good about it."

I mention the 'dinosaur-band' criticism hurled at Mac by young, lean, up and comers such as The Police.

"Yah-ay-yah-yah!" grimaces Mick. "I call that *silly-time* talking. As they inherit more success and more pressures, they too will start spending a lot of money and using a lot of people to put on a good show. I really do think people like The Police saying things like that is silly. Because you do what you think you should do.

"I think for instance The Beatles were always refreshing, no matter how big they got. Because they weren't content to stick to the same old *oooh-oooh* harmonies for the rest of their lives. They had the talent to survive. Whereas, say, Deep Purple hung themselves by staying exactly the same until they broke up."

And finally, we get to the reason why Mick is sitting here, being the centre of this ongoing media circus procession of interviews - the new live, double album.

"Lindsey (*Buckingham, F. Mac guitarist and vocals*) was terrified," reveals Mick. "He hates listening to himself. He loves being live on stage, but he hates hearing the results. I said to him, *'Look I'm sure there's a good live album amongst all the miles of tapes we've got.'* Because I cassette every gig and listen back, and I *knew* there were killer performances there. As I told Lindsey, if there wasn't a good live album amongst everything we'd done, we were a really *bad* band.

"And when we all came to listen to the track selection, Lindsey was there - you could feel he was so tense and about to rip the tape apart. But he listened and he didn't. So the live album came out because we *all* thought it was good enough.

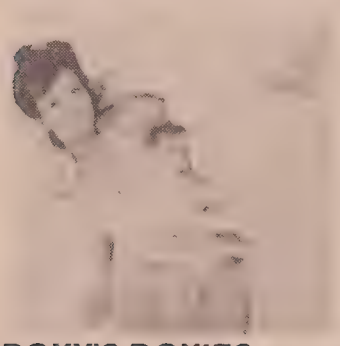
"It's not a *studio* live album, where everything sounds smooth and in place - it's got a rough live feel because that's what we're about on stage. In fact there's only a few overdubs on the whole thing, mostly drop in vocals here and there, and there's only one instrumental overdub - a bit of guitar on *Landslide.*

"What I like about it is, it *sounds* like a live album."

And he gets up, stretches, smiles, shakes hands, poses for one last photo, and wanders off to the loo. A perfectly friendly interviewee. When I bump into him again coming out of the loo, his eyes are blank with non-recognition, already he's perambulating towards the next microphone.

Anthony O'Grady

ROXY MUSIC THROUGH



ROXY'S DOXIES: *Roxy were formed as an 'ideas' band and the concepts have always included covers exploring ever-shifting, intangible auras of sensuality and mystery. And the band's name is in different lettering each album - no corporate logo for these boys. And the girls - ah, the famous Roxy doxies. It all started with the much imitated but never surpassed 'Roxy Music' Chocolate Box cover, featuring model Kari-Ann grimacing from a nest of satin and ruffles. 'For Your Pleasure' had the trans-sexual Amanda Lear leading a panther on a leash towards a Cadillac. Bryan Ferry was the chauffeur but it's not known whether he was one of the ten strong men required to carry the Caddy into the studio. 'Stranded' had Irene Cole glowing with moist lusciousness from a steamy jungle setting. Unfortunately the blue and gold eye make-up didn't*

1972: *Somewhere between Frank Sinatra and Eddie Cochran - Bryan Ferry and the time of 'Roxy Music'.*

1972: *'Ooooh-eeeee and it looks like a Purple People Eater to me!' - Phil Manzanera.*

1972: *The shoulders that powered a thousand power drum fills, The Great Paul Thompson models eye make-up.*

1973: *Eleganza and other Foolish Things. Ferry in solo concert.*

1973: *Phil Manzanera too hot playing in black leather.*

1973: *The Roxy core that gave you 'Stranded', 'Country Life' and 'Siren' - Mackay, Ferry, Manzanera, Jobson, Thompson.*

1978: *Ferry goes Nudies in Los Angeles.*

1978: *Andy Mackay is enfolded by Rock Follies fillies.*

1979: *Andy and Phil deliberate re-building Roxy Music.*

They first appeared in London in late 1971, completely out of the blue. They had been fermenting for a year prior, though - in loungerooms far away from the bustle of the rock circuit.

They were not regular rock musicians except, maybe, for drummer Paul Thompson. They were artists and revolutionary theorists who saw rock music as a pop artform - a package of sound, visuals and staging, fueled by a reservoir of experience, knowledge and theory *outside* rock'n'roll.

Their first gig was a photographer's Xmas party and one partygoer, driven to distraction by the weirdly exotic, amphetamined musical farrago cried, "Play some *rock'n'roll.*"

And the singer just smiled and replied in measured tones, "We *ARE* rock and roll".

And of course, they very soon proved to be.

"Roxy Music can bring pictures to your head like no one else," exalted *Melody Maker* upon release of the first album, *Roxy Music.* "And they've only just begun."

The first hit single was *Virginia Plain.* The second was *Pyjamarama.* Public interest accelerated, the musical press tried to decipher the personalities within this exotic new cipher. They found: Phil Manzanera - a highly individual guitarist, a quiet, shy personality; Andy Mackay an expert oboeist, another unassuming personality; there was Eno who channelled the band's sound through a bank of synthesisers, an erudite electronics wizard who could talk fascinatingly on the avant-garde ideas behind the band; then there was the lead singer, songwriter and idiosyncratic piano player, Bryan Ferry. He believed in keeping pretty much to himself too. His songs, the music, his visual images were his statements.

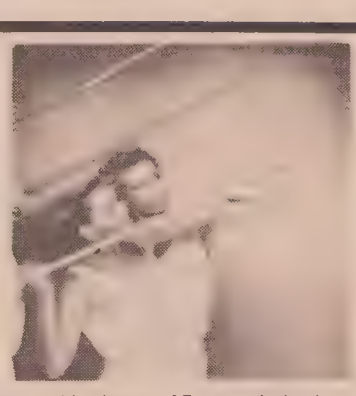
The second album was *For Your Pleasure.* "In many ways, the most interesting Roxy has done," recalled Ferry for RAM magazine in 1975. "There's a good combination of song structures and sound textures . . ."

A modest enough summation of something that has been called "the only true timeless rock ever recorded" *(Julie Burchill from 'The Boy Looked At Johnny').*

Eno left after *Pleasure.* "Two non-musicians in a band is one too many," remarked Bryan at the time, wryly referring to their respective, differing, artistic backgrounds.

Eddie Jobson from Curved Air (which also, of course, produced Stewart Copeland of The Police) joined Roxy. And Bryan came out with his first solo album, *These Foolish Things.* Soon afterwards Roxy released their third album, *Stranded.* The weirder electronic effects had disappeared. Phil Manzanera and Andy Mackay were now in there writing songs with Ferry. It was straighter music, but the multi-dimensional layers of sound and meaning still overlapped to create curious, double-edged allusions and illusions. Somehow it all made sense yet analysis of the parts failed to pinpoint the spirit within the machine - an effect Ferry relished and which has become Roxy's raison d'etre. The

THE CORRIDORS



reproduce in all its glory. On the other hand, Bryan Ferry did land the enviable job of squirting her from a water atomiser. 'Country Life' had two Continental beauties who happened to be staying at the same hotel in Peru as Ferry and photographer Eric Boman. The cover was judged 'too revealing' by American music stores and had to be released there in green shrink-wrap. 'Siren' was Jerry Hall as a mermaid and she also swam through Bryan's life for a while. 'Viva!' was a McLuhanesque video image of Ferry and a backup siren on tour. 'Manifesto', marking the return to recording by Roxy, was a strange party-time collation of shop-window dummies and real people. But can you tell the difference? And finally there's 'Flesh & Blood' with the trio of classically beautiful javelin throwers. An archetypal image straight through the heart.

1972: *Andy Mackay - exquisite pompadour and a most direct gaze.*

1973: *Roxy stand for 'The Strand' from 'For Your Pleasure'. Eno, Mackay, Ferry, Thompson, Manzanera.*

1974-1975: *Ferry, Manzanera, Mackay, Jobson, Thompson, and John Gustafson.*

1976: *Anyone for tennis? Anyone for a solo career?*

1976: *The stamp of marching boots, the military fandango... Roxy take 'Siren' on tour.*

1977: *"Well, if I'm reading RAM, I guess I must be in Australia, right?" The 'In Your Mind' solo tour.*

1979: *Between the buttons... a 'Manifesto'. Mackay, Ferry, Manzanera, Thompson and bassist Gary Tibbs.*

1980: *Flesh and Blood and sweat. Roxy sweats Flesh and Blood on tour.*

band doesn't so much explore the mysterious, it *preserves* it. *Stranded, Country Life, Siren* they're a culminative trio of albums really. Each a little better, more polished, more seamless than the preceding. And there was a second solo album, *Another Time Another Place,* a more sombre work than the party-time favourites of the first.

"About the time of *Siren,"* said Ferry in '79, "I was just starting to get bored. There were various reasons, one of them was the critical backlash myself and Roxy were experiencing at the time *(punk-rock had just captured media attention in England).* But it was never meant to be a permanent layoff."

A Ferry epee and collection of solo B-sides was packaged as an album, *Let's Stick Together,* and he toured Oz in '77 as a solo artiste (Roxy-ites Phil Manzanera and Paul Thompson were in the band), creating indoor crowd records. The tour coincided with a fourth solo album, *In Your Mind.*

Meanwhile Andy Mackay was back in the UK, writing the music for the *Rock Follies* TV series and also writing his own music. Phil Manzanera was also recording his own music. Memories of Roxy revolved around these three being the core of the band. Andy's wall of sound oboe and sax, Manzanera's wringing, oddly-accented guitar, Ferry's sloping keyboards, his insinuating, insistent vocals.

At this stage, Ferry was in America preparing another solo album - *The Bride Stripped Bare.* A harrowing, tense album that often verged towards the sounds of despair and melancholia. Arguably Ferry's most *feelingful* work. But oddly enough, his worst received critically, and worst sales-wise.

But even before the release of *Bride* there were plans for Roxy to reform. 1979's *Manifesto* was a masterpiece of brooding moodiness. Yet there were fun songs there too - pop gems like *Trash* and *Angel Eyes.* 'Roxy reform to make moolah', sneered some critics. But after *Dance Away* had become a graceful, unstoppable No. 1 hit, Roxy were the biggest band in England and Europe.

1980's *Flesh & Blood* reinforced the momentum - it was the top-charting album released in 1980 in England. It stuck around the Top 10 on the Australian charts for three months.

Fragments of past memories crowd into the head when I think about the upcoming Roxy tour. I remember the two Sydney shows in 1975 - the best concerts I've *ever* been to. The grace and studied style of the 1977 solo tour. The excitement and fun of Ferry guest-editing our sixth edition of RAM. *(It even included a Ferry compiled 'Debonair and Suave Test' - very cheeky indeed).* But somehow, time and the inexorable, ever-building parade of product hasn't dried up the enthusiasm, or revealed the secret of inner pulse.

To me, Roxy Music ARE rock'n'roll - because they preserve the mystery.

Anthony O'Grady

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POLICE INVESTIGATIONS

Jottings from the notebook of Inspector PAUL MORLEY on The Case Of The Fabulously Successful, Sort-Of-Blonde Trio.

Sting with crucial exhibit (Pic: Janet Macoska/LFI)

In the lobby of the hotel The Police troupe is slowly gathering. Today The Police play a special concert in Bombay, the first rock concert in the city since Hawkwind played ten years ago. It's a cultural occasion; a significant event.

Because The Police in Bombay is being covered by a posse of film, TV and journalist people, there is always a wait for everyone to assemble before the pack takes off. "Who's not here?" shouts The Police manager Miles Copeland, intensely fluttering as usual. Those that aren't don't answer. Those that are sit on a long seat facing the hotel reception.

Elongated drummer Stewart Copeland sits at the end. His brother Miles resigns himself; those that are coming will come when they come.

He sits next to his brother. In many ways Miles is the fourth member of the group.

"With the belief they have, I think Stewart and Sting and Andy would have made it in the end, but probably not as big. Me, personally, I'd like to think that part of the success of The Police is up to me!"

His brother Stewart has his say. His American accent is slower. "If you like the music then we get credit for that; but if you respect our success then Miles gets a lot of credit for that."

Miles takes off. "The Police is the ultimate dream for everyone. Y'know. It happened without hype: the kids discovered the record in America, the record company followed afterwards, but it was the import that was taking off in the charts not the record . . .

"It is a group that did not get into debt when it started happening, so the first royalties actually went into their pockets. Erm, for me as a manager, they look good, they're co-operative. If you say, 'Hey guys, we need a photograph', they're all there. They're ideal. Obviously I'm speaking comparatively . . ."

"The things that make us co-operative," butts in Stewart, "the things that Miles says are good about us, that we're good boys, are just little things that you've got to do, extra parts of the job. And we definitely get paid for it, to shake another hand. It's not such a hassle."

There is a three-way pull inside The Police. A flamboyant blend of steadiness, tradition, ambition, rivalry, calculation, dedication. Out on the left is the champion Sting. Out on the right are the breathless Copeland brothers. Andy seen-it-all Summers is a placid but influential buffer for this rivalry.

The personality and cool of Sting dominates the group, is the *phenomenon*. But it is the workings of the Copeland brothers - third brother Ian runs an agency in America which gave them their early dates there - that has pushed The Police into their sturdy, unprecedented position. In many ways it has also given Sting his stardom. But whereas Sting will talk about breaking down barriers, looking to challenge stereotypes, the Copelands talk incessantly about facts and figures and markets and success in the abstract.

A lot of the things that are bad about The Police are rooted in the Copelands' activity. Sting suggests this rivalry is stimulating. I ask Stewart about it.

"We've got different things that drive us, that keep us pushing. His is a kind of sense of rivalry and mine is something different. There are different things that I want out of life. I have a different plan for getting them. And I have different kinds of talents for getting them, different things to put into the ballgame to make it happen for both of us.

"During the three years that we've been working together, Sting and I have evolved a way of working with each other that brings the best out of each other, and it's mostly just out of making it hot for each other."

What has success and The Police given to the drummer?

"The fact that I get to do anything that I want to and if I want to do it really seriously I can shun other responsibilities and get really involved in it.

Ordinarily that would not be possible because I would have to earn a daily crust. Things like making movies; such as going to Bombay; such as, well, making records, which is what I'm best at. I mean you can have a pretty good old time and it's been like this for the last year."

Does his immense popularity crush his impetus in any way?

"Oh no, because it's really only different in degree from what I've always known. The feelings I have about my current popularity are pretty much the same as when I first headlined at the Marquee with my own group . . . and you swagger into the club and everyone knows who you are. And it's exactly the same now but to a different degree."

Does he think about responsibilities?

"Sort of. Every now and again. When I'm in a pious mood I do feel that I have to kind of remind myself. I have to kick myself every now and again. I've been doing that regularly up to now and I don't know what good it's done. We're doing this gig in Bombay for charity and so that all seems OK, and I can relax, my karma's alright.

> "I think rock stars let people down in many ways. It's not that they're not intelligent, it's just that they don't think, and that is disgraceful." — **Sting**

"I suppose I'm guilty of a certain amount of vanity . . . shit! . . . y'know . . . you really got to struggle to get where you wanna get and when you get to the top you're bound to want to thumb your nose up at people!"

Sting and I sit on a high balcony of the Taj Mahal Intercontinental Hotel and I say that I feel slightly silly discussing the pop phenomenon in Bombay. "Oh no," Sting shakes his head. "Pop is important."

Have you always loved pop?

I always hated rock in my teens. From about 15 to 25 I stopped listening to it. But I loved the '60s thing and the whole heavy punk thing.

Is it the idea of The Star that interests you in the Ray Davies, John Lennon tradition and not the Plant, Gillan sort of macho thing - and you want to find new ways of adding to that tradition because of what it's given you?

Yeah, I think we add . . . I think the whole school of pop and rock groups take their inspiration from the generation before the last one. We hate the groups from the last generation and so we take our inspiration from somewhere else, and carry on from those people.

Or maybe we're just trying to get as far as they did. The Beatles are definitely the blueprint for almost any group.

Is that an old fashioned thing to say?

It's true, whether it's old fashioned or not, because they did it. They did everything. They did it long before we did. The

So calm...

...so cocky...

...so cool (Pix: Simon Fowler/LFI)

whole perpetuation of the myth and the idol and the star thing, they had it...

And tried to do something strongly within that...
Yeah, I think The Beatles changed the shape of history.

So Pop is important!
Oh, it's vitally important.
I mean, being English from the age of five onwards I've been as interested in who's at the top of the charts as I have been in which Prime Minister or government has been running my life. I think England is probably the only country in the world where it's that important. I don't think America cares that much about it.
England as a community is very pop orientated. I think it's the folk music, the folk culture of our time. People just take it seriously.

But now you are what you are it's important that you resist becoming aloof.
Well, we've got a good start. A lot of groups have an image that is very hard to adhere to, like the stony-faced idol who can never be approached. I think Gary Numan has this, and it looks great at times. But how long can you keep it up? It's not long before people are sick of it.
We get up on stage and we laugh a lot and we tell jokes and we banter with the audience, and I feel very natural. I feel very ordinary in fact. I think that will stay longer than the cold unapproachable icon. That's attractive for a short time - unless it changes all the time, like with Bowie, which is fascinating, it's a work of art. But there's a lot of pressure on him. He can do it because he's a very clever man. We don't have that problem. We're just ourselves.

How does your work in films move into this Sting as Star angle?
I try to keep it very separate now. I've been offered lots of movies lately where the two worlds merge. I was offered a film by Francis Ford Coppola to play the singer in the film, the lead, and it was very attractive. The pedigree of the film was impeccable, but reading the script was like the stereotype rock star with stereotype rock star problems, which has nothing to do with me. I find that too dangerous an area to work in. Too much a risk. The goal at the end of the movie was not worth that risk. What I would get out of working in that movie wouldn't be worth the price of failing in it.

What inputs went into the *Quadrophenia* mod? The character was very enigmatic; lots of secrets in there.
That performance was... me, actually. Definitely part of me and very easy to do.
I'm not an *actor;* looking good on screen is just a matter of intelligence. I was lucky in that film because I was in it just long enough to create a big impression, and not long enough to blow it. It was perfect.
The Police did a lot for that movie actually. The week it came out in England we were number one. I know for a fact they waited until The Police had toured Australia before they released it there.

You taught for two years. Was that a good apprenticeship for what you're doing now?
Yeah, learning to stand up in front of people and not being an arsehole, although I might seem to be one. Self-confidence in front of people. Entertaining, I suppose.
I think the phenomenon in the classroom isn't teaching, it's learning. I think what you have to do is create an atmosphere where people can feel happy and want to learn things, and I think the rock'n'roll thing is similar. You create an atmosphere where people can let themselves go, get worked up if you like. It's a sort of ritualised release. We get back to the placebo thing: wouldn't they be better off on the streets, bringing down the government, killing old ladies? I don't know. Music made me give up teaching.

"I'm not particularly good at one to one for some reason. It's a weird thing, but give me more than twenty people and I'm fucking magic." — **Sting**

So you enjoy being involved in other people's lives?
I feel a lot of responsibility, actually, I don't know how much I'm in their lives. I feel a responsibility and that's a reason that I want to avoid the stereotype. I feel that responsibility very strongly, because I think rock stars let people down in many ways. It's not that they're not intelligent, it's just that they don't think and that is disgraceful. That's an insult to people who follow them, to the people who buy their records.
The average Police fan is spending money on me, he believes in me, and I feel a responsibility to that kid. I don't want to serve him up the same old shit.
First of all I want to please myself, and it would please me more to think that I'm giving more satisfaction than cynically saying, 'Oh, any old shit will do!' But that's such a danger and it happens so often.
It happened to pop in the '70s. It wasn't the artists themselves who were being cynical, it was the industry who created Mud, Sweet, Alvin Stardust, The Bay City Rollers - absolute puppets. They had no intelligence whatsoever in the real sense. The puppetmaster was just breaking them in. And on the other hand, on the serious side, you had Led Zeppelin doing the same thing but pretending they weren't.
So that's why The Sex Pistols happened. And that is why The Sex Pistols are probably the greatest group since...

The Beatles!
They were! They were totally relevant, totally right...
I personally owe a lot to The Sex Pistols. I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for Johnny Rotten. I don't suppose he gives a fuck whether I've said that or not, but I do actually feel that without any of that initial push there would be none of this and we'd still have Gary Glitter.

What about The Police's fame inside rock circles because whenever a wreck of rock is asked what new wave group they like, they always say The Police.
Cozy Powell, Paul McCartney, Ted Nugent, Keith Richard... just another area of society where The Police has infiltrated! From 8 year old girls to 30 year old rock aficionados.

Why do you think these wrecks who perpetuate the stereotypes flipped for The Police despite you being opposed to those stereotypes?
They weren't the only people to like The Police, Paul.

But those who were moving to break down these stereotypes are hostile towards The Police and those who relied on them for their continuing existence were in favour.
Yeah *(sigh)*...

Do these rock elders merely identify with the craftsmanship of the records?
Yeah, I think so. I think they identify with the polish of the records. The way we put them together.
You're right. In many ways that's another albatross around our necks. Fucking hell! Keith Richard likes us! Oh Shit! But Frank Zappa likes us... there's light and shade in the whole thing. I think it's nice that Paul McCartney likes us! I'm greatly honoured! It's just another degree of hipness depending where you're standing.
But I'm most interested in new groups and what they think of us... like Gang of Four... like, well I know that Joe Strummer of The Clash doesn't like us.

What's needed to be done is separate the too-good-to-be-true public image from the actual - what Sting is from what he seems to be.
I think it's a slow process. The initiative is with us: to convince these people. I'd like to convince the *cognoscenti* that we're worthwhile listening to even though we're a pop group. Because I feel that we're in a position where we can make what was once crass worthwhile, and I think they can do the same thing.
Why not sell great music to masses of people? Why not? I think it's a great objective to have. The easiest thing in the world is to appeal to a minority. It's much harder to actually appeal to a lot of people without compromise, without going for the lowest common denominator, but going for a reasonable level of art. I think that's what bands should be aiming for.

How do The Police oppose stereotypes?
In the way we live.

How about performance and presentation?
There's still a lot of tradition in The Police. We're still on the boards and we go through a lot of showbizzy things. I like to get the audience singing. It appeals to the nightclub entertainer in me. It's definitely part of me.
It's not a rock star stereotype. I feel that the old god who stood there and went through his act totally aloof of whether the audience was there or not is something I'm against. I am a musical entertainer. I don't demean people. I don't demean myself.
Like we played at Leeds and you could hear the audience singing the songs louder than the group, and we play fucking loud. That got the old ticker going. I just enjoy it. I don't think there's anything wrong with that.
If that's a stereotype, it's a good one. I want to get rid of negative stereotypes. The ones that almost destroyed rock music.

"When I started, two lines in Melody Maker was incredible, but now I have to have the front page... Then it has to be the front pages of ALL the papers." — **Sting**

So what is integrity? Do we knock The Police for visiting India, does such an exercise put them out of reach, or do we admire their curiosity? Their determination? Their innocence? Is it just part of the game? How frivolously or how sternly do we look upon their visit?
The concert itself was performed for local charities and promoted by a dozen delicate ladies called Time and Talent who usually present sedate classical music concerts. They were highly delighted with what was happening, and happily posed for pictures with the tolerant group.
The machinery and patience necessary to set up the concert were enormous. The Police spent their two days in Bombay wandering through receptions, eating meals, visiting record stores, buying musical instruments, shaking hands and signing autographs. They performed their task without scorn or visible condescension. So polite. It's their job.
During these conversations with Sting we entirely forgot about the circumstances and the commotion, the sweet ladies, the despair all round us, and the nonsense.

How do you feel that The Police introduced reggae music into a white consciousness? A lot of people consider you diluted the music.
Maybe we did. I'm not apologising for that. We're white Anglo Saxons. But I've always loved black music. I feel we add something to it.

Anything you can put your finger on?
Whiteness, I think. It's like the Stones in the '60s were just as valid as John Lee Hooker. I mean, there is a sense of guilt, all white musicians feel that sense of guilt, that sense of duty to the black man, and whenever we meet black musicians, y'know we're interested in what they think of us.

But haven't you taken the reggae thing as far as it can go?
Yeah. People call us a white reggae group, which is a bit of an albatross around our necks. I think it will always be there intrinsically in the music because I think we're good at it, but not as overt as it has been.

Do you place qualitative or quantative demands on what you

(Pic: Simon Fowler/LFI)

do? You say that getting into the charts and writing songs is inseparable; you also say that the charts are a distraction.
The music we make we do the best we can. It's not a sort of cynical, 'Oh, that'll do', or 'Let's go for the lowest common denominator and it'll sell millions anyway'.

We don't do that. This music is the best we can do. We try as hard as we can, and it just happens that it's commercial as well. Six months from now it might not be and six months before this happened it wasn't and that's just an accident of fashion or fad.

I also think it has a lot to do with our image. I think that's inseparable from the music now. The gestalt of music is very simple. Three blond hairs, the macho name, albums that have a very camp title . . . it's very cleverly put together. I'm quite proud of it. The videos are good; it's product. As that, I think it's impeccable.

Yeah, we do have quality control.

What about the money Sting? The hundred billion dollars.
I haven't really got it. It's on paper. We've sold five, six million albums (pre *Zenyatta)* and I get 20 pence each. It's a lot of money, but I haven't got it yet. I still live in a two room flat in Bayswater. I don't have expensive tastes. Next year I'll be rich and that's when the rot could set in. Very easily. I'm very aware that money corrupts.

So why don't you ease back, forget The Police, try something else, if the money could possibly distort the songwriting you say you care so much about?
I enjoy making money as well, it's a complex thing. It is inseparable, which is why it's so difficult. I enjoy making money; I enjoy playing the game that is the charts; I enjoy the success; and I also enjoy the abstraction that is music; and-er-it's a constant battle. But I also enjoy the challenge. I also enjoy that.

So you enjoy being comfortable and enjoy being uncomfortable at the same time?
Yeah, I'm a workaholic. I could never stop working. When I stop this tour it's great to be back with the wife and kid, but pretty soon I want to be back on the road again.

It's the old musicians thing. See, my life is comfortable but difficult. I can't go shopping anymore. I can't scratch my arse in the street because people are watching . . .

Do you 'enjoy' being a celebrity?
I enjoy being the centre of attention. But this is something I enjoyed before I was famous. I enjoyed being a bus-conductor for six months after I left school.

I suppose you were always joking with the old ladies.
Oh well, it's a situation where people are looking at you and you have the ability to entertain them because you're standing up and they're sitting down. So you have a sort of captive audience for a while and you can ponce around or you can tell jokes.

Again, it's creating an atmosphere, and I could do that and that's why I think I was a good teacher.

Where I did really badly - and I've had lots of jobs - was where I didn't have that facility. Like I worked for the Inland Revenue for a while, in an office, from where I almost got the sack. It's almost impossible to get the sack from the Inland Revenue but Stingo almost fucking did - just because it's so isolated from that function for which I feel I've got a talent. I'm not particularly good at one to one for some reason. It's a weird thing, but give me more than twenty people and I'm fucking magic.

Do you need that attention?
I must do. Yeah. And I need it more and more every day. I also need success. It's like a drug. When I first started in the business two lines in *Melody Maker* was incredible, but now I have to have the front page otherwise it doesn't mean anything. Then it has to be the front pages of *all* the papers. Then it just escalates.

So within your life now it's reasonable to expect front pages all the time?
Yeah, you expect more and more. It's a situation I never actually aspired to really. When I left teaching I wanted to be a serious musician. I was a muso basically - beard, into Charlie Mingus - and I wanted to be respected in the jazz world. I really did. But the horizons just kept receding. Your objectives go further and further away.

Like the first objective was to get a single out, just to make a single; the next was to get on the Radio One play list, and it took us ages to get that; and then it was for just one person in the rock press to like us.

And then it just happened: breaking in America, a complete dream, before England: and then to come back to England and the accolade. You find yourself a celebrity overnight.

I fit into it comfortably because I enjoyed it at every stage and I enjoy the stage that I'm at now. I'll enjoy the next stage whatever it is.

You think that it's largely money that damages rock stars?
Yeah, I think so, and that hunger . . . that need. It's like animals that kill for a living, are cunning and intelligent, but an animal that just eats scraps has no challenge, has no goals. They just become stupid.

I am intelligent. I want to maintain my intelligence. So because you have to stay hungry at the same time that you've earned a massive vast fortune is why the band are doing things that are strange; like playing to 50 people in Hong Kong.

Going out of your way to pick fights?
I think so. Also within the group there's a healthy antagonism because we're all very strong egotists. I don't stand there and say, 'Right, we'll do this and that' and it's done. There's always a struggle. It's not easy being in this group for any of us. We keep it hot for each other.

Stewart and I have an intense rivalry which is at times destructive, but is often creative. We like each other; it's not as if we hate each other. We have lived in each other's pockets for three years. For our first American tour there was the three of us in one double bed.

What about the Sting going over the top as glamour boy?
Oh! That's another danger. It is for sale. The whole thing is for sale. We appeal to the anorexic 14 year olds. Why not? In many ways that is what puts the Gang of Four out of influence, because we have this kind of overt pop image.

It's inseparable, it really is. It's helped us get to the position that we're in, but I just want to make music. We'll lose the glamour image very quickly. I'm 28 for fuck's sake.

The concert itself is close to miraculous, vaguely reminiscent of an open air gig in Regents Park. Sting had worried that the audience was just going to sit still, confused, shocked. In the end it was almost too easy a triumph. It was good to share but there was no sense of conquering India.

The event could have crumbled into something ugly. It was a sell-out and excited people without tickets clamoured to get in. There was only one small entrance and so huge uncontrollable queues built up, ticketless and ticketed. The mass outside the gates thought the tapes that were played before the group came on were the actual performance and they panicked.

Miles Copeland cooled things down. They all got in; from the craziest hippy to the Chief of Police.

The gig was exciting! They danced! They sang along! They cheered! They didn't spit! They screamed for more! What a lovely sight.

Afterwards backstage it's like any gig. Young Indians crowd around the group, asking for autographs, offering sincere congratulations. An Indian journalist wanders around until he hits the right person. "How did you get your name?" When he gets to Andy Summers he asks: "What is your favourite beat group?"

Andy Summers passes me by as I chat to an Indian about The Boomtown Rats. "So that was India," Summers shrugs dismissively.

Later still at the hotel, Miles is telling us about how the people who'd paid for the front row - 100 rupee seats - were confused when all the people moved in front of them and started dancing.

"They were complaining they'd paid their money and now they couldn't see, and why didn't all these people sit down? I said, 'It's rock'n'roll, you just got to let it happen'. They understood."

"Oh that's cool," says Sting. "They'll know next time."

Next time?!

"Oh yeah, there'll be a next time."

It really is fun for us. Sometimes it's exhausting, it's really hard work, but it's never a chore. I think I'll always have that. I hope so.

We were talking before about why do people get corrupt? Why do they fall down? Why do they lose touch? I think they've lost the sense of fun, the joy of playing. I think drugs have a lot to do with it.

You don't take drugs?
I'm not puritanical about drugs; I think drugs should be used. I've used cocaine to get me on stage when nothing else would do it. When you've been travelling 17 hours on a plane and done two shows the night before and nothing else would get me on stage, I had a snort of cocaine and I think that is a justifiable use of a chemical. I'm aware of the implication.

As far as sitting around with loads of pals listening to Grateful Dead albums and sticking it up your nose, y'know, *forget it!* I don't want to know.

I've never smoked tobacco so I don't have any inkling to smoke dope. The only time I've ever taken hash is when I've eaten it, and then it's given me nightmares! I'm interested in hallucinogenic drugs as things to be used. I'd never be so stupid as to take drug after drug after drug.

For people who write songs, part of their task is to experience things. I get a lot of inspiration from low-life. You get a lot of low-life being on the road; prostitution, gangsters, dodgy parts of cities. That's a good input to get; to go and experience it.

There has to be people like you who do?
I mean, the other night I went out in Sydney. There's a great part of Sydney called Kings Cross which is a real zoo, and one of the streets there is a total gay street. I'm not gay but I'm fascinated by that and I walked down the street and it was fucking heavy just to see those people obviously lonely looking for love and affection in a way that I find alien. Just to go down that street; I needed to.

You're not singing songs of extreme experience?
No, they're metaphors about loneliness. Everybody feels lonely. Why do they think I am? Maybe they've been fooled by The Cool. I suppose that's it. I've succeeded in fooling them. Jesus Christ!

You can feel lonely doing something as manic as this world tour?
I feel lonely making love to my wife. It's like we're all here but we're totally isolated, no matter how close you are to one person or a hundred you're always totally isolated. And I find that compelling as an image.

How does Sting as Star intrude into your personal life? You had married and had your son Joe before you were a household name.
'76 was a crucial year: I decided to have this kid, live with this girl, quit my job, move to London. It was all a big trauma. And then I saw The Sex Pistols, had my hair cut, dyed it; it was like an acid trip without the acid. It completely turned me around . . .

The constitution we set our marriage on was very flexible. I said, 'Right, we'll have this kid, but I don't ever want to say to him that I gave up the best years of my life for you', because it was said to me. I wanted to carry on living my life to my standards; both of us were like this.

We're rich enough to have a nanny, so we've been very lucky, and our relationship is strong because of these separations. It keeps it fresh.

I've been married four years and I'm still in love.

> "I can feel lonely making love to my wife. It's like we're all here but we're totally isolated..." — **Sting**

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Orchestral Manoeuvres In The Dark

- a big name for a small Liverpool group who after two years and two albums are big news in the U.K. and virtually unknown outside. (There's a few like that...) LYNDON BARBER attempts some illumination, talking with the guiding duo of ANDY McCLUSKY (bass/vocals/synthesisers) and PAUL HUMPHREYS (keyboards).

McClusky and Humphreys have known each other for years. They both went to the same primary school, although Andy was a year above, and in their teens played in various local bands on and off but always seemed to end up playing together.

It was when Andy was in a band with the awful name of "Equinox" that he first started getting into electronics, writing a piece called *Orchestral Manoeuvres In The Dark* which consisted of three radios interfering with each other, war noises off a TV and random drumming!

"At the age of 16 I was dead conceptually," says McCluskey with typical modesty. "The lads used to come round and I'd say 'Listen to this' and they'd say (he puts on a voice which sound even more like John Lennon than usual) 'fucking 'ell, yer don't want us ter play that, do yer?' I can see why they thought I was an idiot."

Around about the same time Paul, who'd studied electronics for three years at college, started building his own noise machines. Andy played in Dalek 1 for a while and then they paired up again as VCL XI (also the title of an old song which they've redone for the new album), later to become the Orchs. The first melodies started happening when they bought a "clapped out old banger" of an electronic piano.

"Our early stuff was pretty dirge like 'cos there's not that much you can do with an oscillator, bass guitar and loads of echo units. We were amazed when we heard the first Cabaret Voltaire things because they sounded so much like VCL XI," Andy tells me. Somehow I'm glad I missed out on the experience.

Their first album had a few bows in that awful direction - *Electricity* (originally released on Factory as their first single), and *Red Flame, White Light*, now described by Andy as "like yeucchh".

But when a re-recorded version of a song from that album, *Messages* became a sizeable hit, it was obvious we weren't dealing with any mere Kraftwerk clones.

For a start, there was McClusky on *Top Of The Pops* playing a *bass guitar*, backed by a *real drummer*. And listening to the lyrics you could hear there was *human emotion*.

Now, their new album, with its attendant hit single, *Enola Gay*, has come along we can totally forgive all their earlier mistakes.

On *Organisation*, the pair have got their feet planted firmly on soil rather than concrete. It's a record that's overwhelmed with feeling: a sombre, queasy mood that manages to relax without complacency. There's a shadow of fear hanging over much of it, like the storm cloud hovering over the valley in the cover picture.

"I don't think we were aiming for anything," says McClusky, "it was just that we were pretty depressed at the time, for various reasons, and I think that came out. Obviously when you realise that some noises you've made have generated a certain mood then you capitalise on it, and the songs tend to lead towards that.

"A lot of the songs started as noises first and the song was built up on top of the noises. All summer I was really into noises."

The pair of them start sniggering about how they get depressed by everything they record. Paul reckons they only like three of their songs - *Messages, Almost* from the first album, and *Stanlow*, the climax to the new album. I find it a bit hard to believe, and when I ask if they really mean it they change their tune.

"We just don't like the way things are recorded," explains Andy. "We never do seem to capture what we thought was there. You think there's one mood and one feeling, and when it's gone down it sounds completely different."

He jumps up suddenly: "But we like the songs! We wouldn't play the songs if we didn't like them, although there are a few which do embarrass me."

He wouldn't name them, of course.

No matter, the Orchs have now come of age, *Organisation* will probably be hated by the people who loved their debut album. I tell Andy and Paul that I think I like the band *in spite of* their use of synthesisers rather than because of it. As usual, it's Andy who replies.

"We try to avoid this electronic tag. Mainly it's been associated with bands that are heavily working this image of electronic music for the future."

He turns to me and apologises for being dull.

"I'm a bit tired today, it's a bit early to talk." I look at my watch, it's close to noon.

If this is what he's like when he's half asleep then I can't imagine what he's like when he's wide awake. The man just hasn't stopped talking. Paul sits silently most of the time, smiling at his partner's frequent quips. He makes the occasional remark, but talks so quietly that I can barely make out what he's saying when I play back the tape of the interview.

"We did start because of the Kraftwerk thing, it was the new music to us," continues Andy (of course). *"Electricity* was based on all this futurism. It was somebody else's idea to us, but we gave that up in '76 and thought there was no point in trying to be modern and new with the equipment we had, it was junk!"

His mouth widens into a grin as broad as an American footballer's shoulders.

"We couldn't pretend to be amazingly technological because we had home made stuff. Paul's keyboard stack was so cheap and nasty it wasn't true. He had this mail order synth when we started getting lumped in with all the technology rock, and when people used to say "it's all machinery" it infuriated us, because there never was a more manually operated synth band than us.

"I do personally dislike the whole Numan-Foxx thing. The futuristic cold wave stuff is a waste of time for me, not least because it's been done before. Nobody can beat Kraftwerk at that game, so we gave up trying."

When I ask if he feels they manage to get a lot of warmth out of their synthesisers, McClusky gets agitated.

"You can do it, you *can* do it! Why not?! People have always used bloody synths to be cold with. It's a load of wank, they can do anything you want. We don't consciously set out to prove that, we're just blokes that like a bit of variety in our music.

"Nothing would bore the pants off me more than having to play a set all night which is all standing still music. I like to bop around, I like to come off stage sweating like a pig, feeling exhausted. People have said to me they're amazed when they see us on stage. It's lively, it's almost rock 'n' rock."

I can't that appealing to the kids who like dressing up for five hours and posing against a pillar for the duration of the evening. OK, so they're not too interested in the music, but whatever's up on stage must at least pass the coolness test - and I can't see the Orchs doing too well in that department.

My guess turns out to be correct. McClusky reckons the bozo contingent in their audiences has dropped off lately.

"I'm glad they don't come much any more, they can fuck off as far as I'm concerned. I'd much rather have a load of 16 year old kids who are there to have a good time and bop around."

One thing that particularly separates Orchestral Manoeuvres from the usual run of synthesiser bands (with the exception of the marvellously witty and melodic Human League) is their use of the *pop song*.

Messages was one of the highs of this summer, a tune that weedled its way into your cerebellum and refused to crawl out again. Likewise their current hit *Enola Gay*. It's one of the more immediately accessible tracks on *Organisation*, but like *Messages*, it's a pop tune that breathes moodiness.

McCluskey laughs. "I like the combination of attractive things that are also deep. *Messages* has got quite a cute tune, but it's about quite a nasty event. I like the combination of attraction and repulsion!

"The thing the music does tend to reflect more than anything else is our attitude towards everything, that there's no such thing as black and white, so that even our pop songs are also a bit moody and melancholy. And vice versa. Some of our moody things have got quite odd things in them...like the beginning of *Statues* has got a little chopsticks intro, and then it goes into a deep drone. It's something I've only just begun to realise, that the music reflects my personal attitude towards things, which is that I'm never sure there's any answer to anything."

Enola Gay is a perfect example of this 'black and white' attitude. Despite its jaunty hummability, it's named after the aeroplane which dropped the atom bomb on Hiroshima, and was something McCluskey came across in a book on the Second World War (I should have guessed).

"The word is GREAT! It's a really strange little couplet. That's the perverse thing coming out. The fact that the aeroplane was called Enola Gay because it was named after the pilot's mother. It's disgusting! Dropping atom bombs on top of people in an aeroplane named after your mum! It's superb. That's the sort of thing that really appeals to my sense of humour, even though it's quite horrendous!"

They're about to start a national tour, despite their dislike of the practice, to promote the new album. And they're planning to cover the whole of the stage floor with astroturf, which Andy reckons is a bit of a wheeze.

"We'll all come on motorised lawnmowers or something! You can't be too serious, not in the stupid business we're in. Who needs bloody music anyway? That's another contradiction we have. We feel the music we write is dead irrelevant, but also we love it."

Also on stage will be two new "members" — Malcolm Holmes on drums and Martin Cooper on keyboards, who both played on the first album, although Paul and Andy retain their roles as "musical directors".

They were hoping to incorporate projections of landscapes as part of the act (but couldn't afford it), which points to an increasing interest in visuals. Andy tells me the BBC wanted them to do some incidental music for a programme called "Potholing in Guyana".

He's being serious . . . I think.

New boys Martin Cooper and Malcolm Holmes keep a close watch on the manoeuvres of Andy and Paul. (Pic: Simon Fowler/LFI)

Early Straits: John Illsley, the departed Dave Knopfler, Pick Withers, Mark Knopfler . . . and primitive wall hangings (Pic: Adrian Boot/LFI)

DIRE STRAITS FOR MODERN TIMES

A continuing series for 19 year-olds of all ages, starring The Band as Themselves, Stevie Nicks as A Part of the Landscape, and Bob Dylan as a Hotel Bedroom. Written and directed by MICHAEL OLDFIELD.

The Straits are playing two nights at the Roxy Theatre this week, and the LA Times greets them with a bitchy slag. Under the headline of "Straits May Be Dire For Group" - boy, what wit - writer Dennis Hunt is convinced that the band has had it.

"The word is," writes Dennis, "that if this album (*Making Movies*), the band's third, isn't a hit, Dire Straits' career may be in dire straits. The problem is that Knopfler and his colleagues are still trying to prove this isn't just a one-song band.

Nobody told him that the last album, *Communique,* sold three million worldwide, obviously. But then are we indeed talking about the same band? Their music is described as "falling somewhere between modern folk and the fringes of the new wave" (eh?) and the conclusion is that "the sound is still rather interesting but it certainly doesn't seem fresh anymore".

Ah, and here's the cop-out, just in case the surfers and a few million others disagree with the analysis: "There's still enough interest in this band that the new (album) could be a big seller."

Welcome to L.A.

Driving into the centre of Los Angeles - if this sprawling metropolis could be said to have such a thing - from the coast along Sunset Boulevard, you pass through Beverley Hills. Behind the gates of Bel-Air, stretching up into the hills, lies the architectural zoo constructed to hold a generation of movie stars whose names live on, thanks to Sunday afternoon TV and film club seasons.

Gigantic Tudor mansions give way to columned porticos, all a mockery of the days when style meant more than dollars. Tacky tastelessness rules here.

Step on the gas - let's get into the more familiar surroundings of Eighties tat. Peering down at you from high above the Strip are the famous billboards . . . movies, albums, stars, rock'n'rollers: they all want you to know them and to love them.

At street level, Miss Pat Collins, billed as the hip hypnotist, would like you to spend an evening in her company at one club. At another, misleadingly titled 77 Sunset Strip (it is in fact about number 3,000), the offer is: "Guaranteed totally nude or double your money back. Amateur night Sunday." Too bad it's Tuesday.

But now we're getting somewhere. Here's the Roxy, and the message, in contrast to the bigness, boldness and brashness of everything else in this city, is quite simple: "Dire Straits. Sold Out."

Welcome to Hollywood.

Bassist John Illsley is a tall man, but the concoction rising from the table in front of him would cut a giant down to size. At its base is half a pineapple and piled up above is an orchardful of fruit held together by a dairyful of cheese. Daunting but delicious.

Dire Straits have just flown from San Francisco, having started the North American leg of their world tour in Canada, and are working their way down the West Coast before going through the South and heading up the East Coast, ending up in Canada again. It's all being done to a punishing schedule, with very few breaks between gigs - but then that's the way they like it.

How's the tour been going so far, then?

"Very well - we're all pretty pleased with the way it's gone. Because we're breaking in a new band here, so by the time we've played a few more days we'll be really hitting a peak," says John.

One-half of the new additions to Dire Straits is sitting opposite, also toying with a gargantuan salad. This is Alan Clark, a Geordie like Mark Knopfler, who's been drafted in to handle a battery of keyboards.

His most pressing problem at the moment, though, is a large, unhappy waitress. "Don't you like the blue cheese dressing," she asks, pointing at a bucketful of blue liquid on the table.

"Er, yeah - very good," is the timid reply.

"Fresh made on the premises," she says, folding her arms across an ample matronly bosom.

"Oh, I, er, didn't realise that." It's obvious there's no pudding for naughty boys who don't eat up all their first course, so time for Alan to beat a hasty retreat.

Exit one new Strait, enter another, accompanied by the band's joint manager Paul Cummings. Hal Lindes has taken over on rhythm guitar from Dave Knopfler, who left earlier this year: the inevitable tension when there are two brothers in the same band, coupled with differing opinions on the way the band should go, seem to be the cause.

That's all behind the Straits now, and Hal's carving out his own musical identity in the band. He's originally from California, up the coast near San Francisco, but, strangely enough, this is the first time he's been in L.A. He's spent the last few years in Britain, working with various bands, but touring at the Straits' level is a whole new world. How's he coping with the punishing schedule?

"They wouldn't know what to do with the spare time if they got it," chips in Paul, to some mirth.

But Hal agrees: "We had a day off last week . . . and it was like something was missing. We'd rather keep working."

Sure are keen, these boys.

Mark Knopfler and I disappear upstairs and find a dressing room where we can talk. The opening track on the new album, *Tunnel Of Love,* seems as good a place as any to start.

Contrary to what I wrote in my review, this song is not about a lonely fairground drifter - a fact which will come as no surprise to Mailbag writer Disgusted Straits Fan of Combe Parva.

Mark, fortunately, is more polite than Disgusted, and puts me right rather than in my place: "It works on two levels . . . which is what I hope most of the songs do. One part goes back to childhood - we used to go to the fair at Whitley Bay. Then there are the references to the band today, 'Sing about the sixblade', and they're all tied in . . ."

Exactly how this is done, is lost to the first of many interruptions. It may never have been found: (Mark was never great with explanations. "When he talks to you, it's like he's having a conversation with himself, and that inner person then explains it to you. Something always seems to be lost in transmission - that's why it comes out slightly garbled," was how one member of the Straits' entourage described the difficulty).

Right now, there's a more pressing problem: Mark's just been told that there will be 150 people from Warner Brothers (Straits' US label) at tonight's show. Very flattering, of course, but that's a lot in a club that only seats 500 - and there are thousands of ordinary Straits' fans who couldn't get tickets.

He'd already been joking about playing the most prestigious club in LA - "They don't applaud here, just rattle their silver coke spoons" - and so Ed Bicknell, partner with Paul in management, is summoned. "There's nothing I can do. They bought the tickets," Ed explains. "You can't stop them, unless you go out and sell the tickets yourself."

The air cools, and Mark is reminded of an incident in New York. "We were playing the Bottom Line, which is a pretty small club, and it was completely packed. Suddenly, this gigantic bouncer starts pushing his way through - people are being knocked out of the way, into each other's drinks. And this guy's shouting: 'Make way for Carly Simon! Make way for Carly Simon!'"

That's not likely to be a problem tonight: the Roxy will be wall-to-wall superstars. Ed's bouncing in and out of the room with the latest requests for seats he's taking every minute

over the phone...

Ryan O'Neal and Farrah Fawcett have just called and they each want a table. But the most enthusiastic supporter of the band in the superstar bracket is Fleetwood Mac's Stevie Nicks, who by all accounts is quite smitten.

So impressed is she with *Making Movies* that she's written a song called *Julia*, inspired by Mark's *Romeo and Juliet*, I'm told, and is planning it for the solo album she's recording with Jimmy Iovine (who produced the Straits' album). There's flattery for you.

Can there be any non-famous supporters in the audience? Maybe not tonight, but two guys are already queuing, sleeping bags and Thermos flasks to the ready, to ensure that they get a decent table for tomorrow night. Mark scurries off to ensure that they get their reservation now without having to spend 24 hours on the pavement.

The houselights go down, and *The Good, The Bad And The Ugly* theme brings the band on to the stage to thunderous applause and the old metallic tinkle. Then the Straits are off and running with *Once Upon A Time In The West*.

From the start it's obvious that this is twice the band it was before. It's slicker, tougher and everybody appears to be enjoying it a lot more. It hangs together as a show, rather than a collection of songs.

Mark's still the frontman, of course, playing wondrous guitar and singing in that blunt, North-east accent, but the band are much more involved: they provide the solid base for Mark's explorations.

And the keyboards seem so right, you wonder why it's taken them so long to add them. Judging from the ecstatic reception, I'm not alone in this view.

The only trouble is, the sound keeps cutting out. Sitting exhausted in their dressing room afterwards, the band try to find out what went wrong. The answer comes back: sound and light are on the same power supply and when the lights are on full, the sound goes.

If that's not bad enough, someone switched on the stage air conditioner halfway through the set, freezing the sweat on the band's bodies. You don't need a degree in medicine to know that this could lead to pneumonia.

There doesn't seem to be much point in telling them how much I enjoyed the set; but I do anyway.

Later, the dressing room's packed out with wellwishers. There are plenty of that American genus who want to hold a guitarist's hand in a bonecrushing grip and say: "Hi, I'm Ed Bushbinder. I broke your record in Cincinatti." ("I always want to tell them that they ought to buy another one then," confides Mark.)

But to compensate, over there is Stevie Nicks, currently having a go at rock critics. "The press are terrible," she's telling a friend, "they always want to go to the opening night. And then they tear the band apart! They never give you a chance."

Sounds like a cue to get an early night.

The next night's soundcheck turns into a rehearsal for yet another TV show, due to be videoed a couple of days later. This time they'll be playing live, and two songs, *Romeo And Juliet* and *Skateaway*, have to be cut down to a combined total of nine minutes.

It's a painstaking business, as the Straits run through the songs time and again with a stopwatch, saving a line here, cutting a break there, snipping the endings of each song until they're spot on to the second.

But tonight there's a high buzz of expectation about the gig. Roy Bittan, from Bruce Springsteen's E Street Band, will be guesting on *Tunnel Of Love*, playing the keyboard part as he did on the album.

This is the song that begins with an extract from Rogers and Hammerstein's *Carousel Waltz*. How did that come about, I ask Mark during a breather from the umpteenth version of *Skateaway*.

"I remembered it from the fairground but I didn't know its name. Then when we started doing the album, I was going round humming this tune to people saying, 'Do you know this?' and they'd say, 'Sure' and finish it off. So I'd ask them what it was called and they'd say 'I dunno'.

"I went to libraries and sound effects places and listened to a lot of calliope music... and then someone recognised it."

Onstage Mark himself usually plays the introduction. "I'm really excited about working with keyboards. I wrote most of the new songs on them, rather than guitar. I'm like a kid with a new toy."

He looks round and notices the audience streaming in. We flee upstairs.

I'm curious to know what's happened to the songs which the band have never recrded and are now dropped from the set - *Real Girl, What's The Matter With You Baby* and *Twistin' By The Pool* (which got as far as a demo single) are three that come to mind.

"They'll probably end up on a bootleg," says Mark, and starts telling about the forest of mikes that are hoisted up from the audience at some gigs, especially in Germany.

"Oh that's terrible. Can't anything be done about it?" says Hal, looking very worried. And then he adds, very sheepishly, "I once bootlegged Phil Everly."

The laughter's my cue to return to the balcony eyrie.

Bob Dylan's down there, I'm told. I peer out for a rubberneck, but all I can see is the back of someone's head. Then the whistle from *The Good, The Bad And The Ugly* kills all curiosity.

Halfway into *Once Upon A Time In The West* it's obvious that this is going to be a killer set. Everything's coming together so well, the memory of last night fades away.

This *Once Upon A Time*, like all the stage versions of studio songs, is much, much stronger, the contrasts between mellow guitar breaks and bursts of combined band energy are highlighted; the pace keeps changing but the band never lose their grip on the song.

Onto *Expresso Love*, which really burns - I can hardly believe this is the same song. It dies on a note that gives birth to *Down To The Waterline*, the drama stretched to its limit, Mark's vocals at their most emphatic.

The slightest pause, and into *Lions*. Here especially you notice the tightening up that's gone on in the band: more ensemble playing heightens the impact of Mark's solos, which reach peaks of intensity.

A funky keyboard intro leads into *Follow Me Home*, a superb guitar solo rising from the song's haunting theme. A simple, eerie pulsebeat from Pick's drums takes them into *Skateaway*, which just gets higher and higher, building up by solid steps to a crescendo.

Mark switches to his National guitar for *Romeo And Juliet*, a beautiful song where a sparse arrangement allows the melody to shine through. Back to power for a thundering *In The Gallery*, followed by a dramatic reading of *News*, which breaks into a metronome drumbeat midway, punctuated by growls and roars from Mark's guitar and swirling keyboard flurries, building up a brooding, almost dangerous, atmosphere.

And then *Sultans*, taken at breakneck pace but still sounding fresh, draws a frenzied reaction from the audience. How to follow that? Mark takes the keyboard intro to *Les Boys* and John plays it for laughs, camping it up with highkicks, in partnership with Hal.

Portobello Belle is fleshed out now with keyboards, and *Angel Of Mercy* is almost a new song; it's been completely rearranged and sounds so much better.

(Pic: Mike Putland/LFI)

Finally, Mark introduces Roy Bittan, but despite the well-laid plans there still seems to be some confusion about who's doing what. It doesn't show in the music, though: forget *Sultans*, this is the best song Mark's ever written.

After a set like this, there's no way the audience is going to let them go and the Straits return for *Wild West End*, which stays closest to the record of all the songs performed tonight, and *Where Do You Think You're Going*, a gentle way to let us down.

They were right. This is a new band - and there aren't many others around to touch them.

Bob Dylan appears to be having trouble with a photographer. With the houselights up I can see him now, whenever the bulky figure of Twiggy's husband moves out of the way.

I scan the emptying room to see if I can spot any other familiar faces; next thing I know, Bob's on the balcony next to me.

"Sure get a good view from up here," he says. I'm not about to argue.

"Those lights are real good. I really liked those lights," he goes on. Seems like an odd comment after all the great music that's been going down, but I explain that the Straits have their own lighting man who is using the houselights.

"Tell me, how do you get up there?" he asks, pointing at the lighting box on the other side of the club. I take advice, and guess that there's no way Bob's going to be climbing up there.

That's right: what he wants to do now is meet Mark and Pick (both played on Dylan's *Slow Train Coming* album). I go down the corridor, stick my head around the door and inform five elated Straits, dressed in sweat and underpants, that The Great Man awaits them.

Meanwhile, Bob's introduced himself to the Straits' lighting man: "Some idiot told me it was a houseman up there. I knew they must've had their own man."

Now hang on a second, Bob, this idiot told you nothing of the sort... no, maybe not. Don't want to cause a scene. I hop off for a chat with some friends.

When I get back, the corridor's packed with Dixie Dregs, musicians, liggers and lumbers. I try and slip into the dressing room to eavesdrop on the Knopfler-Dylan reunion, but I'm earholed by a zany-looking girl.

"I'm in a band," she informs me. "We haven't got a name yet, but I've written over 60 songs. And a rock opera." The conversation gets crazier, and I'm not sure whether she's trying to seduce me or earbash me. Each time I edge away, she pulls me back. God knows how she got past security.

Finally I escape her clutches and move inside. Mark, Pick, Dylan and entourage are in deep conversation in one corner, so I go and talk about the gig with John. We don't get very far, because a familiar voice intrudes.

"They always close at ten, but it was later than that so for the first time I used my name. 'Do you close at ten for Stevie Nicks?' I asked."

Anywhere but this town they'd have said yes and slammed the phone down.

Back to the gig. Er, no... Stevie starts up again, this time about hairdressing: should she have her hair cut. "If you do, I will," she promises her friend.

There's something so mundane about this conversation that it spreads like wildfire. Suddenly everyone's talking about their hair. And by the time I've finished boring everyone with the details of my last haircut, Dylan's disappeared.

But half an hour later he's here in Mark's hotel room, relaxing in a plush armchair talking to Pick - could've been about hairdressing: I never did ask. Stevie's around but I steer well clear in case I get started into a discussion about painting your toenails or something.

Some time later the room's thinned out and Paul comes over and asks John if he can borrow his acoustic. "Bob's going to have a singsong," he announces. I'm a little rusty on *Blowin' In The Wind*, not to mention *Onward Christian Soldiers*, but it sounds like fun.

Perhaps through fear of the latter song, or more likely the blase nature of LA folk, people are leaving all the time. Dylan disappears into the bedroom with friends. Sounds of tuning up and then what may be an old Buddy Holly song. Just my luck to be in the only hotel room in the world with adequate soundproofing.

People are occasionally walking into the bedroom, taking a look, and then coming out again - maybe this kind of thing happens all the time here - and when the door is opened I hear snatches of singing. Eventually, as he strikes into a long version of the old blues song *Baby What You Want Me To Do*, I decide what the hell, he doesn't know I'm a journalist (I hope) and as long as nobody gives the game away, I should be all right.

I go into the bedroom, slump down on the carpet and prop myself up on the wall. Dylan's perched in the centre of the bed with one guitar, Tim Drummond, his bass player, is sitting on the floor beside me with another. Sitting crosslegged at the head of the bed is his black girl singer.

They start up another song I've never heard before, Dylan and the girl singing in perfect harmony, her voice soaring high and pure, his sounding like... well, Bob Dylan. The intimacy of the scene, the beauty of the song - they take the breath away.

In comes Mark. Tim gives him his guitar, and Dylan and he start picking an instrumental. By now the bedroom's getting crowded and Mark's getting uncomfortable, so he forces a reluctant Dylan into the sitting room.

Bob's raring to go, though, and he sits himself on the edge of an armchair and starts another song, possibly titled *Carribean Wind*. This is Dylan at his very best: enigmatic lyrics which seem a lot more gritty than we've been hearing recently, and a simple but beautiful melody. The spell is cast, and it encaptures the dozen or so people who are privileged to hear this private recital, and lasts me through frequent visits to the bathroom to sneak out a notebook and jot down a few possible song titles when I can make a reasonable guess what they are.

Another song, *Woman By The Well*, again with those haunting harmonies, leads into a bluesy instrumental with Mark taking the lead, which is much more relaxed - and musically ragged - than the songs, but a lot of fun.

"That's a good tune, Bob," says Mark when they've played it to the end.

"Yeah, what is it?"

"I thought it was one of yours."

"No, it's not my tune. I thought it was yours."

Thus is music created.

A gospel-sounding song, *Ain't No Man Righteous Enough*, follows, to the accompaniment of a sacreligious whoop of "hallelujah" from Pick.

But Mark's anxious for Bob to do a few old favourites.

"We do a lot of old tunes now. Yeah, let's see, we do *Fever*." Mark starts up the song, but Bob lets it fizzle out. Mark tries another one.

"Do that one that goes 'Guns across the prairie'." Bob will not be drawn.

"Here's a tune you might like," he says, and goes into a jokey song, *A Couple More Years*, that draws a lot of laughter. Then another light number, *She's Not For You*.

The next one only lasts half a verse.

"Having trouble with my lyrics tonight," says Bob.

"You always did write too many," comes the reply from Mark.

Songs are started but never finished, loose instrumentals are tried; there's no shortage of suggestions from the floor, but Bob's not playing requests tonight. It's 3am and the musicians are getting tired. Time for us all to go.

As I wander back to my room, walking on air, someone just stops me from stepping into the swimming pool.

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IF YOU HAD TOO MUCH TO THINK LAST NIGHT, SEE DOC AT THE RADAR STATION

Don Van Vliet a.k.a. Captain Beefheart

Though CAPTAIN BEEFHEART's orbit is far from conventional rock'n'roll (or conventional anything else), some of his creations like *Trout Mask Replica*, have left a small audience totally amazed for over a decade. Prolonged exposure can have dangerously liberating effects on what you think music is . . . but PAUL RAMBALI takes his chances with the Shiny Beast from the Mojave Desert.

"God-damn that beat!" Don Van Vliet slams out a foursquare tattoo on the dashboard of his blue Volvo estate. "That mama heartbeat. That bom . . . bom . . . bom! Why do they do that? Don't they know it's bad for the heart? I would never treat my heart that way. I don't want my heart to attack me!"

Don Van Vliet is railing against the vile monotonous mama heartbeat of what passes for music in a world of limited sensibility where he lives with his unlimited sensibilities. And he isn't kidding. Where he hears a myriad symphony I hear only the wind whistling through the window. Where he sees a terrifying menace I see only a large, gleaming truck. But if his grip on reality is slack, his grip on the wheel is sure. For a moment, it's hard to tell which is enjoying the greater acceleration, his mind or his car. "I have four wheels beneath me, one in my hand, and I'm trying to do this interview. You have a lot of nerve, sir," he exclaims as we slide past the gleaming menace. "You're not even worried!"

Why should I be? I'm safe. Safe as milk. I'm in the hands of someone who knows how to plug in, to connect, to strip away the surface and feel the sensation. His nerve ends are alive to sensory input most of us have learned to tune out for sanity's sake. Don Van Vliet may be a lot of things but he will never be bored.

I breathe with every pore," he says, and I have no reason to doubt him.

Besides, before he became Captain Beefheart, the legendary Captain Beefheart, when he was just Don Van Vliet, a teenage beatnik prodigy, he used to race Porsche 904s, a sleek little '50s fastback that could turn on a dime. He used to race them out in the desert, to which we are heading, out of Los Angeles on the freeway via Antelope Valley at far less than racing tilt.

When at a very early age he won a scholarship to study sculpture in Europe, his parents tried to curb the young artist by moving to the most culturally barren environment imaginable, the Mojave Desert. Their son still lives there, with his wife Jan, in a rented trailer located somewhere between Los Angeles and Death Valley. It affords plenty of solitude, some unusual wildlife, and ample room to race cars . . .

Not that Don Van Vliet does that anymore, although in his youth he wanted nothing more than to be a great racing driver, or a great sculptor. One of his desert haunts was Pancho Barnes' Fly Inn, where X-series rocket test pilots from Edwards Air Force Base would go to unwind after burning up a mixture of alcohol and liquid oxygen in the atmosphere and before doing the same to the empty desert highways in imported Ferraris and 3-litre Austin Healeys.

And if he wasn't at the Fly Inn then he'd be at the clubs like the Insomniac in LA, digging blues, jazz, folk and poetry and hanging out with Lenny Bruce. It was at the Insomniac that he saw A.J. Lloyd and Ewan McColl perform English folk songs from a collection called *Blow Boys Blow*, still his favourite record. But Don Van Vliet is much more than just a product of the salubrious intellectual climate of California during the '50s beat uprising . . . "When I was three, I said to my mother: you be Sue, I'll be Don, and he (my father) will be Glen. Don't step over the line and we'll be friends. I said that to her when I was three. I sent my mother home my navel! What else could I do? She appreciated it, she went along."

. . .And much more than just educated in hip. He came to know the world in ways you don't learn at school, to which he never went, and where he never learnt to think in a straight line.

"Hey! If you want to be a different fish, you've got to jump out of the school . . ."

The Magic Band: John French, Robert Williams, The Captain, Eric Feldman and Jeff Tepper

Captain Beefheart has just released a new album.

A lot of people didn't even notice. *Doc At The Radar Station* was written in 35 minutes and recorded in just over a week. Like almost everything he has done over the past 13 years, it is powerful, complex, raw and uncompromised. It has nothing to do with fashion or tradition or any art doctrine or movement, it's purely and simply a howling affirmation of *life.*

Life is precious and too easily squandered. Captain Beefheart doesn't like to waste a moment. "I once stayed up for a year and a half. Between the ages of 25 and 26½ I didn't go to sleep at all . . . Lost all my friends though!"

When so much of what is considered pertinent in art these days is produced out of fear and alienation, Beefheart's music is more than just bracing, it's impertinent. Breathe in its breadth if you can. But be warned that you can't dance to it and you can't wear it like a badge. If it means anything to you it will mean more than that.

Doc At The Radar Station is his most urgent work since *Lick My Decals Off, Baby,* the album that a decade ago followed hard on the heels of *Trout Mask Replica* — easily the most unique and overwhelming creation ever to languish in the general category of rock. It demands a momentous and equal critique. Portentious statements merely sell it short. And I'd be baying at the moon before I came close.

But back in the Frownland that Beefheart invited everybody to leave behind in the opening moments of *Trout Mask* there are still some to whom his music is just noise and accidents, a shapeless head-on tumult of sound. Not so. Every note, every dischord is pre-ordained. His are some of the most meticulous compositions ever. In what can seem like cacophony there is a splendid sonority, with all the resounding excitement of chaos.

And like the music, his verse is also irreducible. If you could boil down the music you might get naked free jazz and swamproot blues but the words would just evaporate. Beefheart's lyrical terrain ranges from the salty to the surreal. He plays with words like a child with toys, and they seem to have a vividness for him that they lose in the minds of most people.

"I once stayed up
for a year and a half.
Between the ages of 25 and
26½ I didn't go to sleep
at all . . .
Lost all my friends though!"

He takes delight in metaphors, puns and similies, which are so abused and under-used by lazy and dull minds that we forget they have the greatest illuminative power of all language. Beefheart finds in such word-play the only adequate vessel for his delirious perceptions, and it can be a heady cup to drink from.

For instance, he doesn't like to smoke dope. . . . "It makes me feel like a fly with a wing caught in honey!"

The B-52s share his fondness for the wild metaphor (as well as his strong ecological concern), and numerous other new rock figures pay tribute to him as a source of musical inspiration (in the case of Devo and The Pop Group) and sheer inspiration.

Because Captain Beefheart has done what all art should aspire to, and that is to touch people's lives; not just decorate their lifestyle or adorn their clothes but actually strike deep down on a dormant nerve, awaken and flex sleeping senses.

Beefheart doesn't just entertain with dirty king hex mojo navigation (as he proved he could with *Clear Spot,* the unsung soul album of the decade), or provide any of the other things we look for in our leisure hours. He provides a key to limitless possibilities and he sounds the alarm on everything that is shallow, bogus or mercenary. Take my word for it, or ask Jerry Dammers, or Johnny Rotten . . .

The latter recently did himself a dis-service by passing up the chance to meet Beefheart. The two of them were invited by a woman who works for the *LA Times,* but Rotten never arrived, a show of apparent bad manners that appals the gentleman in Mr Van Vliet.

"A lady invites a man to dinner and he doesn't even show up? *Shit.* I thought he was alright before that, but who does things like that to a lady? That's too casual for me. And I would have liked to have met him because I've seen him in many audiences of mine, many! Hell yes, I recognise people in audiences! I've seen *you* before . . ."

At the age of 39, Don Van Vliet cuts a strange and hidden figure. He shuffles along like a janitor, but a second glance reveals some minor dischords: a sketch book clutched under arm; an old, expensive felt hat; in one pocket a pair of sunglasses bought so long ago they're almost fashionable; a clothes-peg clipped to the other. Unlike the healthy, tanned Californian animal, he wears the look of a man for whom the night-time is the right time. In fact, he says he came out of the Van Gogh museum in Holland and was disappointed with the sun. Has been ever since.

He shakes hands meekly but fixes you with eyes like pins. His presence is slight but uncanny. People barely notice this creature in their midst, and he himself is far more relaxed when surrounded by the eerie Joshua trees of the desert. "They can't even see us," he will later remark of the plastic patrons of a plastic desert motel bar. "They don't even know we're here . . ." An automat waitress chooses that moment to look right through me.

I have a lotta fun doing what I do because I get to meet artistic people; people that care about raising the art culture, which naturally I care about because I'm an artist.

"I always say an artist is one who kids himself the most gracefully. But I really am. I've tried other things and they don't work. I've been an uplock installator for an aviation company. The uplock is the landing gears. Hydraulic technician is what I was, they said, but I'm an imposter. I went in there and I didn't know anything.

"I did it with a lot of care, though, and it gave me extremely bad headaches. Then I've sold shoes . . . I think that's a very important thing, a shoe. What else? I've sold vacuum cleaners, I sold Aldous Huxley a vacuum cleaner in Lano-Lano, California. He used to do all the cleaning and have his wife sit down and watch. Isn't that nice?"

It's not easy to hold Don Van Vliet's attention on prosaic details. I had just asked him about the fabled *Bat Chain Puller* tape, a set of demos featuring the genesis of the new Magic Band and versions of several songs that appear on *Doc* and '78s *Shiny Beast,* a return to virtue after a long spell of little or misguided activity.

"That's a beautiful album, isn't it? They don't even know that in England. They do? Well, they didn't buy it. They couldn't afford to, could they? I wish I had a lot of money: I'd give everybody one!"

It wasn't deliberate, but Virgin Records allowed what would eventually become *Shiny Beast* to circulate in its demo state - a bad move about which the Captain is angry but forgiving. "Friends don't mind just how you grow," he says, quoting himself. "I've got a lot of them. I've got a lot of albums in me. I've just started. I mean, I have the *right* ingredients now."

Meaning the new Magic Band: Robert Williams on drums, Eric Feldman on bass and keyboards, Jeff Tepper on slide guitar, and new recruit Richard Snyder also on slide guitar. Rick Redus, who played on *Shiny Beast,* has since departed, and Drumbo (John French), who has played with Beefheart since *Safe As Milk* in '67, and who played almost unrepeatable drums and guitar on parts of 'Doc', doesn't want to play live.

The new Magic Band give the impression of having grown up alongside Zoot Horn Rollo, Rockette Morton, Art Tripp III, and Winged Eel Fingerling, so adept are they at making the fluid polyrhythmic moves of the music. It's as if they already knew it by heart . . .

"No. I wish it was. You can say that if you want, but I know you don't have a very good time with lies - I can tell by your eyes. But there is one guy that came to me like that, the Winnebego Sioux, German and Scottish fellow, whom I call Brave Midnight Hat-size Snyder. he likes it, and he told me I've got a Brave Midnight Hat-size Snyder for life. 'I won't ever leave this band,' he said..

"I had just a few days to find a guitarist and he called me on the phone and said 'let's do it.' I said you gotta learn 29 songs in three weeks, and he did it! I can't believe it. He's the best there is with Jeff Tepper. Incredible! I've got it now. I've been looking for 15 years for this. It's that good . . ."

Later, in the plastic motel bar at the edge of the desert, he finally opens the sketch book he has been carrying around with him all day long . . .

"50 years from now, you'll wish you'd gone *'wow!'* . . ."

Whether he was right or not, the odd thing was, he didn't sound the least bit bitter about it.

The Magic Band rehearse in a low rent LA studio behind a bike shop, accessible via a yard scattered with dead iron ponies. The group have been there for three weeks,

"I have a beef in my heart about the things they've done in this world. Since I was born, I've been aghast, stunned ... why didn't they put Band-Aids on the flaw?"

The Art and Band of Beefheart

rehearsing the material, old and new, that Beefheart wants to perform on his current European tour.

They rehearse mostly from records, and he comes in only to fine tune them. On this particular day, they're working on *Sugar And Spikes,* grinding it to perfection, swapping searing time signatures as though it were second nature, burning a hole in the original version.

Beefheart sits on the sofa, his eyes glistening with excitement. He declines to sing, saying wait until we get on stage, and instead he cajoles, encourages, teases, tries to throw them off, fails, and just laughs at how good they are.

"I've got my play cut out for me. Did you *hear* that? I used to work with those other guys, but I play with these fellows!"

I ask Robert Wilson what it's like playing with Captain Beefheart.

"A hell of a lot easier than working with Hugh Cornwell ..."

The conversation turns, innocent enough, to the subject of whether women like Beefheart's music. He claims they do. The Magic Band disagree. "Some do," says Jeff Tepper, "but not as many as he thinks!"

"Women like my music," says Beefheart. "Sure they do. I do it mainly for women. Obviously. What other reason is there? I'm going to be doing *Nowadays A Woman's Gotta Hit A Man* on this tour. I've done a lot of things about women. I care about them. I like them. They have never scared me, never. I think they're superior, actually. And I've never had a thought of any fear or animosity about them!"

Captain Beefheart's mind alights where it will. He's a hard man to stay on the track of. He flits from one subject to another like a bee in a garden. But if he is occasionally vague, he's never distant. Frankly, he's one of the sharpest people I've ever met. He reads people very closely, too closely to get along with them in any conventional manner.

"I always feel as if I'm baby-sitting," he says of his relationship to the human race. "I think there's forty people in the world and five of them are hamburgers. You must have read that. There are a few people that I like, but most of them are dead. Isn't that awful? Van Gogh, Shakespeare, most of the people that I *really* like ..."

Beefheart used to own a late '50s Jaguar. One day he was driving along when he saw a billboard advertising a brand of house paint with the extravagant and highly debatable claim that Vincent Van Gogh would have used this brand were he still in a position to paint his house. The Captain was so incensed that he drove straight off the highway.

"I'll tell you who I miss right now very much ... his wife came to see me recently ... Roland Kirk, Rahsaan Roland Kirk. He was a very good friend of mine. He was one of the best people I ever met; he was brilliant, a *brilliant* man. Very under-estimated. He was one of the best horn players that ever lived. Some people know that, but not many.

"I remember that last thing I said to him. It was at a club called the Lighthouse, a famous jazz club. He had just finished playing and he came over and said to me: 'How am I going to get something to eat, Don?' I said: 'Roland, the only place you can find ribs at this time of night in Los Angeles is in the Bible!' He *laughed,* boy, he laughed. I was so happy that I had said something that pleased him. That was the last time I saw him alive. Man, that guy played so beautifully. Have you ever heard *You Did It* by him. *Phew!*

"I also like Thelonious Monk very much. I once saw him at a place in the Valley, some new theatre that had come up with some sort of extravaganza. He got there half an hour late and there was tribute waiting for him: a glass bowl full of red roses. You know what he did? There was a grand piano, a beautiful Steinway. He still had on his overcoat; he picked up the bowl of roses, dumped the whole thing into the piano, slammed the top closed, sat down, hit one note and split! Hey, I clapped for half an hour! I mean, what else? That was beautiful, and it sounded beautiful too. He hit the *right* note.

"Mind you, some people thought he didn't play for long enough ... Some people have had too much to think. 'Open up another case of the punks'. I'm not talking about the punk people, that is not what I meant. I have no animosity. Too smart for that.

"But I have to say that punk all sounds to me like a rehashing of old rock'n'roll. I don't like that. Didn't like old rock'n'roll in the first place. I was a sculptor, I didn't pay any attention to that. You want me to tell you the truth? I don't care that much for music ..."

Captain Beefheart doesn't care that much for music ... Of course he doesn't! He's a visionary. A witchdoctor! In another age he would have been just a poet. He has too much dignity to become a guru in this. So he does music. Why?

"As an irritant. What would somebody this smart be doing it for other than that? I like poetry, and I put music with poetry and things like that. Maybe I'm a cook. Or an alchemist, maybe. Who knows? I'm just getting started with the spells I do.

"But I have a beef in my heart about the things they've done in this world. Since I was born I've been aghast, stunned ... Why didn't they put Band-aids on the flaw? Why didn't human beings study and fix these things? I don't know.

"I'm trying to do all I can and I have been all of my life. And I thought there would have been more happening by now. I thought that *Trout Mask* might do something to break up that catatonic state. That's why I did it, to take the labels off ... get rid of the labels and let's see what's going on. But they do more *bom ... bom ... bom.* I'm so sick of that mama heartbeat! Hey, listen ... I don't want my heart to attack me! I would never treat my heart that way. Never."

The score at this point is about even. The world hasn't woken up and Don Van Vliet hasn't gone to sleep. And if you have ears, you have to listen to him. He can make you want to rattle your cage, and rattle everybody else's cage too; sellotape their eyes open and remove all the labels, grab them by the neck and rub their faces in the heat of existence.

Captain Beefheart is a primal current, almost a folk artist. He trusts his instincts ...

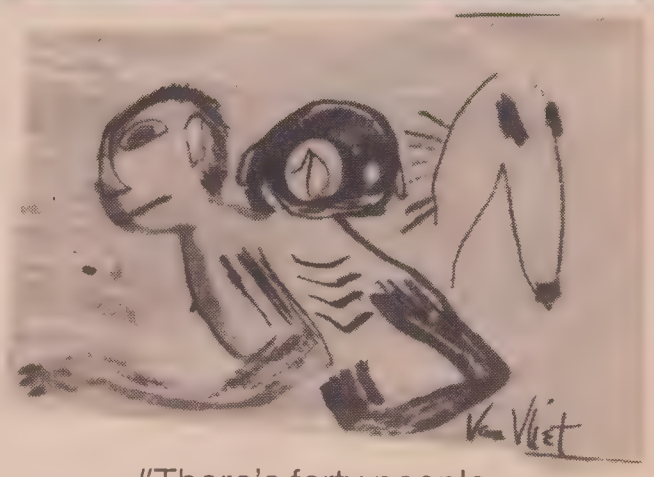
"All the time."

Do they ever let you down?

"Many times."

But you still trust them?

"Sure I do. Friends don't mind just how you grow. I made friends with me a long time ago."



"There's forty people in the world and five of them are hamburgers."

RAM

Adoption Centre

RAM No. 2
Jethro Tull - Ian Anderson in-depth interview; Ariel in England; Pink Floyd - Still on the Dark Side of the Moon; Rick Wakeman's Guide to Aussie Beer; Bad Company - Sleazy or Erotic Pop?; Tangerine Dream do Cathedral; Joni Mitchell - Just a Pretty Voice; Oxhibiz; Mick Jagger; The Crystals; The Occult; Travelling through Bali, Jakarta and Singapore.

SOLD OUT

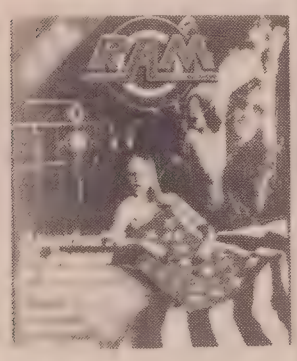
RAM No. 3
Elton John, His Life and Times - Part 1; Jim Keays - 3 million years after the Masters' Apprentices; Tommy; Little Feat; Whaddever happened to Auntie Jack? Suzi Quatro; Ginger Baker; Gary Glitter; Lindisfarne; Roxy Music; Mahavishnu Orchestra; Chuck Berry; Freddie Hill; Bumming Through Asia; Sly and the Family Stone.

RAM No. 4
Bryan Ferry & Roxy Music; Rufus; Captain Matchbox - Six Years of unrelieved mania; AC/DC; Slowhand Eric Clapton; Will the real Leo Sayer please stand up; Elton John - Part 2; John Lennon; Yet Another Rock Quiz; The Andy Fraser Band; Eric Burdon; Lou Reed.

RAM No. 5
Alice Cooper; Eric Clapton - Part 2; Bob Hudson - Truckin' with Hush; Lab Elton John - Part 3; Tom The Movie and the Album Moody Blues; David Bowie.

SOLD OUT

RAM No. 7
Stevie Wright - Black Eyed Bruiser; Ringo; Rick Wakeman reveals King Arthur; The RAM guide to Buying a Bike; The Dingo Tapes - Part 1; What Kush really means; Elton John - Part 5; Yes; Tales of the Iron Handed Jon Anderson; Janis Joplin - The Book, The Movie, The Album; The Who; Ronnie Wood; Shiva; Reg Livermore.



RAM No. 8
Leo Sayer; Rod Stewart and Mick Jagger in Groupie Land '75; Dingo Tapes - Part 2; Ayers Rock; Thorpie and The Taxman; Dreaming of Mandu; Tales of the Taj Mahal; The Blow your Mind Quiz; ELP; Minnie Riperton, Gryphon.

SOLD OUT

RAM No. 9
The all new Phil Manning; Bachman Turner Overdrive in search of a riff; Railroad Gin bide their time in Brisbane; Captain Fantastic Elton John; Adam Faith on wings of Stardust; Brian Cadd; The Beatles - Part 1; Symphonic Sebastian Hardy; Ted Mulry; Carly Simon; Virginmanship.

RAM No. 11
David Bowie World Exclusive, Hot City Bump Band, Alice Cooper's Sex Education, Rolling Stones USA; Pete Townshend of The Who — Part 1, William Shakespeare; Melbourne Magic Mystery Tour; Bushwackers Band

RAM No. 12
An Afternoon Of Sheer Terror With Lou Reed; Norman Gunston explains how to be a Pop Star; Marcia Hines, Ariel's Support Band Blues; Rick Wakeman Goes Broke; Tony Mitchell of Sherbet, The Sweet, David Essex, Gloria Gaynor; Johnny Dick, Pete Townshend — Part 2

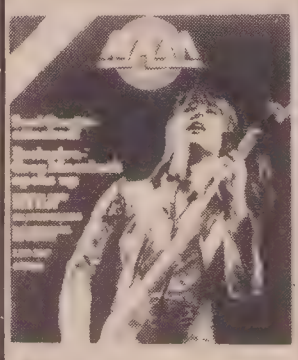
RAM No. 13
Eric Clapton's Three Lost Years, Sherbet Truck On; Gary Glitter and the International Rock set; Ross Ryan denies Melancholy; The Kinks; Steve Harley and Cockney Rebel; Neil Young; Johnny Farnham; Kerrie Biddell; Little River Band; Elton John's New Band.

RAM No. 14
Paul McCartney Assassination Attempt, Bob Marley and The Wailers Reggae Revolution; David Bowie Falls Apart; Flo and Eddie; John Paul Young's Sordid Past; The Rolling Stones; Queen; Electric Light Orchestra; Hush; Captain Rock; Mike McClellan

RAM No. 16
Status Quo — 13 yrs. of rockin' the street punks; Black Sabbath; Stevie Wright; Rod Stewart; Split Enz, Supertramp; Lou Reed; Stylus; Stephane Grappelli, Stevie Wonder, The Sweet, Linda Kristen; Bob & Maureen's Problem Page — Part 2; Kush — Part 2; Ramblin' — Letters from abroad; Max Merritt, Renee Geyer

SOLD OUT

RAM No. 17
Roger Daltrey, Captain Matchbox, Sparks; Bryan Ferry; Doug Parkinson, Cher and Gregg Allman, Afghanistan — The Head's Paradise, Pink Floyd, Mike Oldfield, Dragon



RAM No. 19
Alice Cooper, Red Symons, Donovan Bruce Springsteen, Macca and Wings Suzi Quatro, Status Quo, Bay City Rollers, John Paul Young, Living on the Cheap — Part 2; Skateboards Hawkwind, Buffalo, Jaws; Ayers Rock, Jethro Tull Neil Sedaka

SOLD OUT

RAM No. 20
Black Sabbath, Deep Purple/Sherbet, Bowie's Mum on Dope, Jethro Tull, Elton John, Uriah Heep, Uncle Bob's Band, Skateboarding, Crossfire, RAM goes to, King of Slop Awards sorry, should read Pop; A-Z of leavin' home, RAM casts an eye on Pornography, Living on the Cheap — Part 3; Finch

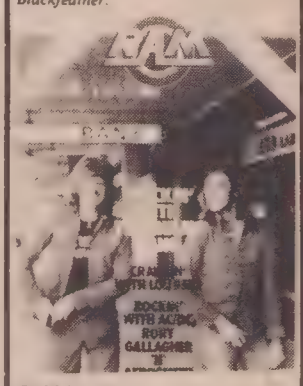
RAM No. 21
The Who; The Oz Disco Boom, Bob Dylan, Ayers Rock; Genesis; Ol' 55, RAM's Guide to the General Election, The Sweet; Marc Bolan; Stylus; Eating On The Cheap; Van McCoy; Marcia Hines; Freakin' Out On Grass, Freeway; Geoff Duff; Billy Thorpe

RAM No. 22
Stereo made simple; Deep Purple without Blackmore; Skyhooks on Tour Yes, Hush; Norman Gunston, Alex Harvey, Bay City Rollers; Renee Geyer; Oz Bands — 1975 Round-up, Captain Matchbox; Shirley Strachan, Living on the Cheap — Transport, Leon Russell.

RAM No. 23
Bruce Springsteen and the Hype Life, The Faces, Grand Funk; Ariel; Exclusive wall chart showing history of The Beatles; Lisztomania; Average White Band; Jim Keays, Review of Tours in 1975; RAM New Year's Honours List; Dennis Wilson — the metamorphosis of the Guitar Hero, Lindsay Kemp, Flowers and David Bowie; H. P. Lovecraft; Review of RAM/Levis Sydney Punk Band Thriller

RAM No. 24
Queen, The Eagles — Joe Walsh gives up his solo career to join 'em; Doobie Bros, Frank Zappa, Jimi Hendrix, J. J. Cale, Duster Bennett; Southern Cross, Ike and Tina Turner, Mandrax — the good and bad times; Sherbet and Skyhooks in concert, Dylan; Rolling Stones; Roxy Music

RAM No. 26
Farewell to Skyhooks; Joe Walsh and The Eagles; Kiss; Ayers Rock; 10cc; Rolling Stones; Thundaband; Radio Birdman, RAM/Mamiya Photo Contest — Prize Winning Pics; Cocaine — the latest 'in' drug — Part 1; Cat Stevens; Dope legislation; Blackfeather.



RAM No. 27
Special First Birthday issue; Ted Mulry Gang; Bob Dylan and the Rolling Thunder Revue; AC/DC; Aerosmith, Rory Gallagher; Sebastian Hardie; Venereal Diseases; Cocaine — the latest 'in' drug — Part 2; Lou Reed plus Coney Island Baby Alum Review, Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band; Average White Band; Chubby Checker, Elvis Presley; Railroad Gin, Silver Studs

RAM No. 28
David Bowie — Start of his new world tour, Led Zeppelin, Dingoes, Hush, Alex Harvey, Richard Clapton, The Death of Punk Rock; C. W. McCall Convoy & diction of truckies' terms; Neil Diamond, Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan, Crazy Joe Gallo, Singapore, Elton, Nick Hill, Karl Taylor, Huntress, Groundhogs, Telepathie; Report on the Marijuana Reports

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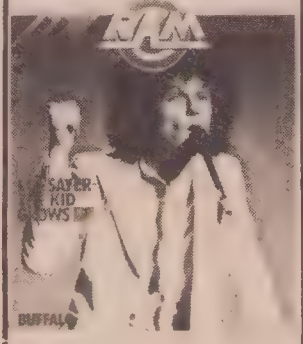

RAM No. 29
Leo Sayer Grows Up, Bad Company Buffalo, David Essex, Abba; Kevin Borich, Disco Music, Wayne Kramer Superman vs. Spider-Man Saltbush Carol Lloyd Band, Geeza, Gene Pitney Genesis, David Cassidy Roadies — the Unsung Heroes Hash Oil, Neil Diamond Concert Reviews

RAM No. 30
Queen; A weekend with AC/DC Supertramp, The Moody Blues; Lobby Loyde; Emmylou Harris, Ayers Rock Peter Weir, Director of Picnic at Hanging Rock, Sailor, Marianne Faithfull, Margret Roadknight; John Entwistle; Dove; Slade, Roy Wood, Chris Farlowe Band, Leo Sayer, Split Enz; Melanie, Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhee

RAM No. 31
Clive Shakespeare on why he's no longer with Sherbet — a RAM exclusive, David Bowie; A tribute to Paul Kossoff; Phil Spector and his amazing claims concerning The Beatles; Ted Nugent; Abba; Dangers of Aerosols; Melbourne pub rock scene, The Walker Bros.; Finch; Carol Lloyd, Stars; The Wild Beaver Band, Benny & The Jets; Travel — Fiji, Gary Glitter

RAM No. 32
Led Zep & Presence, On the road with Hush; Skyhooks — Exclusive report on U.S. Tour, Freddie Mercury, Bill Wyman; Kiss; One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest; Avalanche; Neil Young, Batman, Kaye & Kyffin Band, America; Peter Hurkos — Is He The Psychic of the Century?; Eric Burdon & The Animals; Lynyrd Skynyrd; Betty Davis; David Essex; Lindsay Kemp, Jimmy Cliff; Snuff movies; Sydney dance scene; Noise problems in Brisbane.

RAM No. 35
Kiss — Alive & Bleeding To Death; Pink Floyd — The Early Days; John Paul Young; Nils Lofgren; Stars; Alan Sandow; Oz Rad[illegible] 55; Ted Mulry Gang; Lobby Loyde; Hush; Rabbit; Dingoes; Ayers Rock; Millionaires; Cannabis Research Foundation; Sebastian Hardie; Mark Holden; Andy Upton; Deodato; Hush; UFOs; How To Bluff Your Way Through The Heavy Rock Trip

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RAM No. 36
Little Feat; Sherbet — Howzat! Special; Peter Frampton; Max Merritt; Little River Band; Supertramp; Billy Thorpe; Moody Blues; Elton John Family Scam; Johnny Rocco; Ted Nugent; Angels; Beatles vs. Abba; Macca; AC/DC; Cash Backman, Ward & Johnson; Geoff Duff; 5FX; The Millionaires

RAM No. 37
Skyhooks; Ol' 55; America; Flo & Eddie; Jethro Tull, Billy T; Steely Dan, Chuck Berry; Rod Stewart, Sherbet In Concert; David Bowie; Dragon; Canned Heat, Roy Buchanan; AC/DC, Doctors of Madness; Alice Cooper, Fritz and the Nullabor Cats; Cannabis Research Foundation; The Man Who Fell To Earth, Dr Hook; Rod Stewart

RAM No. 39
Sensational Alex Harvey Band, Go Biking' Special; AC/DC London Tapes, Beatles Memorabilia; Eric Burdon, Taste, Mad Dog Morgan, Cocaine, Black Oak Arkansas, Beach Boys; Oz Recording Studios; Flo & Eddie; Stiletto; Aerosmith; Ray Burgess, Finch, Uncle Bob's Band, Karl Taylor, Stuart Sutcliffe — The 5th Beatle, The Kinks

RAM No. 40
Hush, Deep Purple exclusive, Status Quo in Oz, Marcia Hines, The Ramones, Dope decriminalisation Dobie Gray, On the road with Jo Jo Zep, Richard Clapton; Ralph McTell Skyhooks, Radio Birdman, John Cale, Ol' 55, Harvey Mandel; Tapestry, Beniamin Hugg

RAM No. 41
Fleetwood Mac, Jefferson Airplane/Starship, Elton John, Lou Reed, John Lennon, On the road with Sherbet, Bill Bruford & Genesis, Rick Springfield, Ariel, Jimmy Carter exclusive, Kevin Johnson, Kenneth Anger, Billy Joel, Skyhooks, The Grateful Dead, The Devil's Playground

RAM No. 42
Ted Nugent — axeman extraordinaire, SAHB, Johnny Young, Thin Lizzy; Frank Zappa, B. B. King, 1st national [illegible] conference, Little River [illegible], Billy Connolly; Bleeding Hearts, Hunter S. Thompson, Mike McClellan, Ross Wilson; Elvis Presley; Blue Oyster Cult; Rabbit, Split Enz; Richard Clapton, Matchbox.

RAM No. 47
Rod Stewart's new band; Grace Slick — exclusive interview; O'Grady with Sherbet in London; Black Sabbath, AC/DC; Phil Manning; Dr Feelgood; Marcia Hines; Photo contest winners; Shirley Strachan; Hush; Abba; John Lennon; John Wayne; J. J. McRoach's special recipes; Rabbit; Ringo Starr; Ry Cooder; Leo Sayer; Skyhooks.

RAM No. 51
Split Enz cover story; King Kong; Tommy Bolin; The Last [illegible] 76 show, Kiss, Boston; Jackson Browne; The Song Remains The [illegible]; Aerosmith, The Saints; [illegible]naires; G-Band, Maria M[illegible] Tour Quiz; This Is Queensland Part I; Russell Morris, Roy Buchanan; Billy Preston; Kansas, Buffalo, Chuck McKinney.

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RAM No. 52
Rod Stewart; Bryan Ferry; Little River Band; 10 CC; 60 albums quest, Hawkwind; London; This is Queensland, Part II; Genesis; Perth Entertainment Centre; Nazareth; U-Turn, Tomlin; David Bowie; Pink Floyd; Steve Harley; Robert Palmer; Z Z Top; Racing Cars; Jeff Beck w. Jan Hammer, Led Zeppelin; Pure Shit.

RAM No. 53
The Runaways, Abba Dartboard/Keef Richard, New York; The Saints; Robin Trower; John Paul Young; I Was A Teenage Dope Test[illegible]ard Clapton; Twister; La[illegible]e Cafe; Kevin Borich Expre[illegible]n Coyne; Billy T; Air Supp[illegible]; Balmer; Benny And The J[illegible]ris Finnen, 801; Rod Stewart, Dutch Tilders; Max Merritt and the Meteors; Rose Tattoo; Sherbet; Dragon, Supernaut

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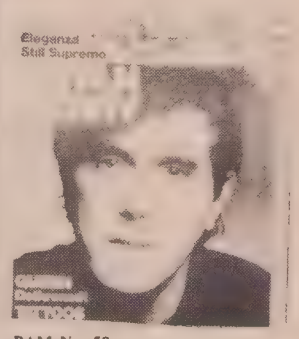
RAM No. 54
Alice Cooper — the complete & terrifying history; Jackson Browne; In search of the real Elvis; AC/DC; Status Quo, RSG; Mary Frampton, Skyhooks Split; Chariot; Country Joe McDonald; Dutch Tilders, Australia: The Politics of Disorder — The Saints, Ramones, Radio Birdman; Statue Quo Live, Average White Band, Eddie & The Hot Rods, JO Jo Zepp; Gladys Knight & The Pips

RAM No. 55
Bryan Ferry, Anatomy of a Split — Skyhooks, Alice Cooper; Led Zeppelin, The Off Show, Boston; Graham Parker & The Rumour; Can; Hush, Greece, San Francisco; Abba; Letter from London; Punks, Bobby Vee, Stop The Smoking in Nepal; Ferret; Country Joe McDonald & Kevin Coyne; The Saints, Scandal

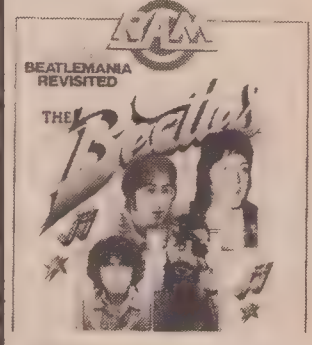
RAM No. 56
Peter Frampton cover story; Rolling Stones, The Tubes; Little River Band, Iggy pop, Bee Gees, Emerson, Lake & Palmer; Stiletto; Procul Harum, Pussyfoot, Geoff Duff; Lasers, Matt Taylor, Ariel, Gary Waddell; Steve Groves, The Musicians' Co-Op, Nils Lofgren, Klaatu, AC/DC, The Damned, Jethro Tull, Ross Ryan, The Ritchie Family; Alice Cooper, Buffalo; The Harder They Come



RAM No. 58
Bryan Ferry; Little River Gazette, Renee Geyer, Fleetwood Mac; Queen; Tattoos, Shaun Cassidy; Billion Dollar Babies; Richard Clapton; Chalice; Leong Lau; Cliff Richard; Mother Goose; Aeriel; Rock: A Space Odyssey; Television; The Beach Boys; The Kinks; John Paul Young, Iggy Pop

RAM No. 59
Dr. Hook; Bad Company; David Bowie; JYP & And The All Stores; Roots in Australia; Lou Reed; A Sherbet for a Day; Jon English; Franki Valli and The Four Seasons; The Dictators; Carol Lloyd; Marc Bolan; Oz Recording with John Sayers; The Beach Boys; New Wave; The Commodores; Ross Ryan; The Beatles; Supertramp; Slade; The Band; ELP, Bryan Ferry; Little River Band.

RAM No. 60
Sherbet, Bryan Ferry in Oz; Little River Band, Roger Daltrey, Mickey Mouse; Bruce Springsteen, Clive Shakespeare; Ross Wilson, Laurie Stone; Eno; Buffalo; Musicians Union, Radio Airplay; Jo Jo Zep; Moonlight; Johns and Gallin; Geeza, Liberty.



RAM No. 61
The Beatles; Sex Pistols, Jim Dusty, Bryan Ferry in [illegible]t Eastwood; Are You A T[illegible] Alcoholic?; Amplifiers; Th[illegible]nts; Neil Young; Tim Gaze; [illegible] Saints, The Chieftains, J.O'K; elvis; Kraftwerk, Smokie, Bleeding Hearts, Bootlace.

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RAM No. 62
Joe Cocker; Dragon; American Heavy Metal (Kiss, Starz, Rush, Styx, Angel, Mahogany Rush, Rex), Fleetwood Mac, Little River Band; Bob Seger, Junk Food; Alice Cooper, Jamie Dunn, Punkz; Jupiter, Johnny Rotten's Mum, AC/DC.

RAM No. 69
Marc Bolan; Peter [illegible] Pete Townsend, Old R[illegible]ars; Motocross, Aerosmith [illegible] Frampton; The Vibrators [illegible]phonic ABC; Flashez, Bob [illegible]y, The Wave Game, '77 Film Awards.

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RAM No. 70
Lou Reed, Rockarena, Randy Newman, Mother Goose; Sports; Loungeroom Recording Studio, Split Enz; John Cale; Shirley Strachan; Ayers Rock.

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RAM No. 75
RAM Rock Poll Winners; Led Zeppelin; 1977 Rock Diary; Australian Music, Heavy Metal; Glam Rock; Music Expo, The Real Thing, Chariot, The Elvis Industry; Mother Goose; Ozzie Osbourne; The Muppets, Sex Pistols, Mike Rudd; '77 the year that was

RAM No. 76
Discover Graham Parker, Kevin Borich, Hip.Easy Listening,- Heavy Metal, Klaatu, AC/DC; Moose Malone; Red Symons; Ray Burton, Gloria Jones, Air Supply; Parachute, Status Quo, Leon Berger; John Paul Young, Dylan's Reynaldo And Clara, Dracula in Perth.

RAM No. 77
Summer rock, Boz Scaggs, Bob Dylan, Beach Boys, E.L.O.; Jeff Lynne, Star Wars leads sci-fi; Sleaze; Country rock, When Machines Played The Musicians, Billy Thorpe, Richard Clapton, Devo, Big Swifty; Sports; Elvis Presley's Estate, The Who movie, Computer concert tickets, Julie Covington; Ken Schaffer, Neils Hutchinson, Suburbs, Aleph.

RAM No. 78
Flexidisc - Elvis Costello, Ian Dury, The Dole & Youth Unemployment - great rock game for real to play. A whole page stat[illegible]u. Chicago Death, Boz [illegible]. Renee Geyer, Reggae, Sherbet, Bob Welch, Redhouse. Survivors, Residents, Abba.

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RAM No. 79
Band Equipment Guide: Amplifiers. The Beach Boys - the external youth elixir. The First Australian Report on groupies. E.L.O. 'Fake' claims, Johnny Winter - blood, drugs and resurrection. The Electric Ned Kelly Show. 70's guide to soul and punk. Sherbet, Dead Boys, Midnight Oil, Krishna Frolics, Aerosmith, Stars.

RAM No. 80
The First Australian Groupies Report (Pt. 2). The man who was zapped by Bob Dylan. Frank Zappa - no future? George Benson 'n all that jazz. Rock movies; Keef 'n' drugs; Boz Scagga; Radio Birdman; Mondo Rock; Ramones; Jackson Browne, Monkees; Phil Manzanera.

RAM No. 81
Dragon - real weird tales from the strangest band in the land. Graham Parker - madness on the phone to Oz. Mexico. Skyhooks - new elpee; Johnny O'Keefe - the first and future King; Billy Joel - Pre-tour delights.

RAM No. 82
David Bowie - Rock hero turns movie gigolo; Bob Marley; Queen - they are the champions; Foreigner - first tour; Split Enz - in the Beach Boys - drunken [illegible]s; Skyhooks, N.Z. Rock, [illegible]die; Scandal; Nuclear War; Air Supply; K.B.E.; Nick Lowe; Jo Jo Zep.

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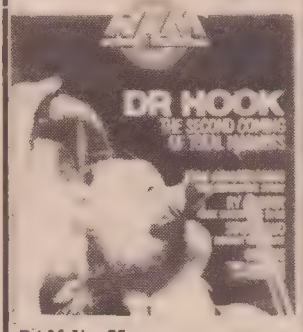
Little River Band; Bob Dylan - concert chaos; Bryan Ferry - prisoner in; Eric Clapton - reluctant hero; Rush - right wing rock B.B. King - blues are forever; The Babys; Kansas; Jeff St. John; T.M.G.; Red Hot Peppers; Paul McCartney; Sweet; Elvis Costello.

RAM No. 84
Paul McCartney; Leo Sayer - wild on the streets; Tom Robinson Band - rising free; The Angels - hello Haloes; Blondie - the sexist pig show; Brian Eno - Bowie cohort speaks; Little River Band - new elpee; Foreigner; Kate Bush; Cheap Trick; New Zealand after dark; Dave Warner; Space Loomes; Sweet.



RAM No. 85
Dr. Hook - the second coming of total madness; Joan Armatrading - the definitive story. Ry Cooder - W'Ry eccentric in Oz; Status Quo - rockin' Germany; Genesis - the American apocalypse; Bob Seger; Bowie; Warren Zevon; Rick Formosa; Radio Birdman; Bob Marley; Patti Smith; Eddie Riff.

RAM No. 86
Jethro Tull - Popularity Crisis? Elvis Costello - this year's interview; Sandy Denny R.I.P.; Win with Sports! Introducing Eddie Riff: New Rockcomic; Bee Gees disown Australia; Space Movies; Sat. Night Fever; Manning; James Brown; Ray Burton; Jo Jo Zep; Sweet Jayne; Uriah Heep; Lou Reed; Saints.

RAM No. 88
J.P.Y.; L.R.B.; AC/DC; New Stones/Springsteen Elpees; Graham Parker - [illegible] men in dark glasses ro[illegible]; Split Enz - startling cha[illegible] T.V.; Alice Cooper[illegible]ack Sabbath Bloodb[illegible] Matchbox; Joe Walsh, [illegible]detto; Madder Lake; Tom Waits; Elks; Supernaut; The Boral

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RAM No. 90
Thin Lizzy - the new face of hard rock; Jefferson Starship - old hippies how out? Bob Dylan - new elpee; Rolling Stones - live in New York; Van Halen - happiness is a big P.A.; George Thorogood - happiness is the blooze; Whale's last stand; U.F.O.; E.L.O.; Russell Morris; Hot Chocolate; 60's rock returns.

RAM No. 91
Free record from Angels; Peter Gabriel - the bald truth; Frank Zappa - from genius dirty old man; Silverscreen Special - The Last Waltz (Robbie Robertson), Newsfront, [illegible] Wednesday; Sex Pistols; T[illegible] Petty; Jethro Tull; Robyn [illegible]cher; Elvis Costello; N.Z. bands; Anne Kirkpatrick; J.P.Y.; Radio War.

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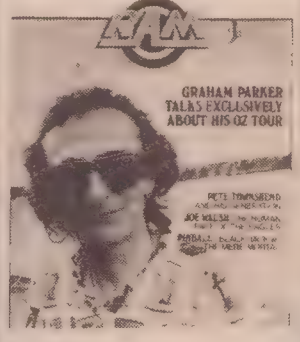
RAM No. 92
Dragon; Sherbet; Bruce Springsteen - fights the past; Dave Gilmour - the heart of Pink Floyd; Alan Parsons - pyramid power; Johnny Cougar - the kid's alright. Silverscreen - Grease, Sgt. Peppers, Hot Wax.



RAM No. 93
Graham Parker - talks about Oz tour; Pete Townshend and his generation; Joe Walsh - the human face of the Eagles; Pinball - Black Jack vs. the mere mortal; Tom Waits; Ross Wilson; Sports; Stiletto; Sherbet; Skyhooks; Peter Cook and Dudley Moore; Darryl Cotton.

RAM No. 94
Special P.A. Supplement: On the eve of his drug trial Keith Richard talks; Farewell Keith Moon - a retrospective; Runaways - flat busted in 78; War of the Worlds - disco from outer space; The Death of Punk - rot in pieces; Leo de Castro, Jon English; Sex Pistols; Etta James; Midnight Oil; David Johansen; Otway & Barrett; High Rise Bombers; Rock Movies.

RAM No. 95
David Bowie - looking back on the Thin White Duke; [illegible] - wet and sloppy; Ronnie [illegible] - phones from Brazil; [illegible]adler - blessed with b[illegible]ent and gorgeous tits; A[illegible]; Jo Jo Zep; Russell Morris; Grateful Dead; Blondie; Eddie Riff; Dave Warner.

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RAM No. 96
Jethro Tull - flashers round the world; J.O'K - a tribute; Bryan Ferry - better but bitter; Little River Band - reconquering Australia; Bette Midler - what she does on stage; Photo Contest; Thin Lizzy; 10CC; Patti Smith; Juke Boxes; Yes; Linda Ronstadt.

RAM No. 98
Bowie the O[illegible]ew; Frampton - Road Te[illegible]d; The Who - 1st Interview; Springsteen - myth maker; Elton [illegible], Frank Zappa; Dire Strai[illegible]'55; Saints - go to hell; Neil Young.

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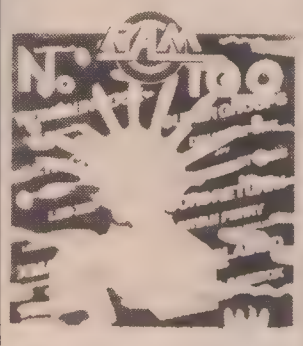

RAM No. 100 $2
SPECIAL DOUBLE ISSUE
116 pages. Films, New Wave. Worst RAM letters; The Who; Elton John; Supergroups; Oz Rock; Drug Reports; Women In Rock; Bryan Ferry; Reggae; Rock Quiz; RAM Songbook; Jim Morrison new! And also Dave Warner; Linda Ronstadt; Rod Stewart; Skyhooks; Bowie; LRB; Stones; Sports; JPY; Jon English;

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RAM No. 101
Eric Clapton - Guitar God Unrecognised; Sports - All fine in 79; Elvis Costello - the Oz rampage New elpee exclusive, The Cars; Chicago - new life for Old Hippies?; Superman, The Fury, Doobie Bros, Todd Rundgren, Uriah Heep, The Clash, Hells Angels, Burning Spear.

RAM No. 102
Rod Stewart - Just how sexy?; Split Enz Return!; Peter Tosh; Young Modern; Mike Oldfield; Dingoes Demise; Uriah Heep; Black Sabbath; Frankie Miller; The Dots; Lou Reed; Smokie; Chicago; Lynne Hamilton.

RAM No. 103
78/79 is the year of The Angels; Kevin Borich; Rolling Stones - Keith Richards Exclusive; Angel Dust; Midnight Oil; Rose Tattoo; Stars; Stranglers; Lindisfarne; Supernaut; Dylan Bootleg; Genya Ravan; Tiny Tim

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RAM No. 104
Catching the Street-smouts with Cold Chisel; The Stranglers - new wave UK rock tours Oz; Sid Vicious; Elvis Costello; Rod Stewart in concert; Dire Straits interview; The Doors; U.F.O.'s; AC/DC; Bee Gees; Sports/Split Enz new elpees; Who is Kim Fowley.

RAM No. 105
Van Morrison - exclusive interview; Dragon split, Marc Hunter's last stand; Linda Ronstadt; Devo; Rock Comedy - Monty Python, Steve Martin, Cheech & Chong; New Skyhooks in concert; Rod Stewart fake; Stranglers in Oz; Dr Who; Films; Mi-Sex.

RAM No. 106
Led Zeppelin - new album; Roxy Music; New Dragon; The Clash; Village People; Doug Parkinson; Max Merritt; Bowie, Jefferson Starship; The Aliens; Sex Pistols in court

RAM No. 107
Australian Tour Exclusive; Bob Marley in Jamaica; Roxy Music return in triumph; Sherbet; Bad Company; Marijuana Decriminalisation Movement; Rodriguez; Renee Geyer & Kevin Borich join forces; Iggy Pop; Razar; Toto; Romantics; Maria Muldaur; Stockley, See & Mason; Air Supply; Babys.

RAM No. 108
Blondie - face of marble, heart of glass; Angels - studio exclusive; Ian Dury; Graham Parker; Fawlty Towers Pt. 2; In defence of the doley; Tom Waits; The Reels; Sex Pistols; Bob Seger; Beach Boys; Bryan Ferry; Barry Mann; Radiators; Babys; John Cleese.

RAM No. 109
The 20th Century Dracula Obsession; Bob Marley; Joe Cocker; Marc Hunter; Cheap Trick; Boomtown Rats; U.F.O.; Vietnam Movies; Richard Clapton; Reels; Bob Welch; Skyhooks; Gang warfare in the U.S.A.; Contraband; Dots

RAM No. 110
Dave Warner; Lou Reed bops Bowie; Lene Lovich; Magnificent Torment Sports The English Report Card; Sci-Fi movies; Overkill; Black Sabbath, Interview; Richard Clapton; Eric Gradman's Man & Machine; Gang Flicks; Mark Gillespie; Rod Stewart; Ian Dury; XL Capris.

RAM No. 111
David Bowie - new 'Lodger' album exclusive; Cold Chisel - tasting success; Thin Lizzy; Talking Heads; Rock Radio - the RAM Report; Ibanez Guitars reviewed; Ol '55; Matchbox; Max Merritt; Bob Dylan; Dragon; Asian Rock; X; Jo Jo Zep.

RAM No. 112
The Do It Yourself Ian Dury review; The Angels; Sports; The Babys; The Sydney explosion - 20 new bands head for the top; Rock on TV; Gerry Rafferty; Larry Norman; Led Zep; Lene Lovich; Tubes; Dragon; Sparks; X-Ray Spex; Bee Gees.

RAM No. 113
Mad Max - the Mel Gibson interview; Dire Straits; John McLaughlin; Midnight Oil; Melbourne bands; Oz radio; Talking Heads; Pop Muzik; Rickie Lee Jones; Bowie; Hello Sailor; Crossfire; Abba; Donna Summer; Movies; Books.

RAM No. 114
The Angels - the new centurians of rock'n'roll; Bryan Ferry; XTC; Keef Richards & Ron Wood - the New Barbarians; Dolly Parton; Flowers; Robert Palmer; Elvis Costello; Jimmy & The Boys; Australian Crawl; Pere Ubu; U.K. Devo; Patti Smith.

RAM No. 115
Cold Chisel - the fire that burns within; Silver Screen special; Brian Jones; Iggy Pop; Jo Jo Zep; Mental As Anything; Dr Feelgood; Lou Reed; Kiss; Joni Mitchell; Cars; Nick Lowe; Dave Edmunds; Peter Frampton.

RAM No. 116
Supertramp - schizophrenia in heaven; Kevin Borich; Nick Lowe & Dave Edmunds; Stars; Lowell George; Jon English; Mi-Sex; The Cars; Rex Smith; Films;
Films; Fleetwood Mac; Loaded Dice; Velvet Underground; Swanee; Movies.

RAM No. 117
Jimmy Page - comes in through the out door; Led Zeppelin - reviewed live in Copenhagen; XTC - fall in love in Oz; Comrades of War - Radio Birdman's last stand; Thin Lizzy; Chuck Berry; Cars; Numbers; Bushwackers; Siouxsie & The Banshees; Smokie.

RAM No. 118
Bob Dylan Exclusive new album preview; Led Zeppelin; Ian Dury; The Knack; Joe Jackson; Richard Clapton; Jerry Lee Lewis; The China Syndrome; LRB; Aliens; Street Talk; Mondo Rock.

RAM No. 119
Joan Armatrading - [illegible]rating the privacy; Ry Co[illegible]; AC/DC; The B-52's; Harry [illegible]n, The Humen; Russell Mo[illegible]dnight Oil; Jerry Lee Lewis; [illegible]ackers; LRB; Mi-Sex; Dugite, Voyager; Creedence Clearwater Revival.

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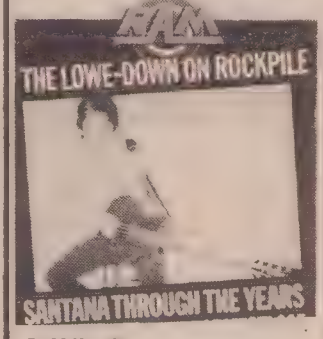
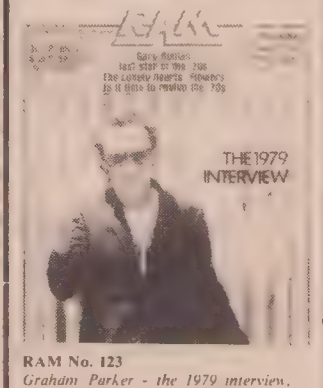


RAM No. 120
The Lowe-Down on Rockpile; Santana through the years; the new adventures of Meatloaf; Radiators; Mi-Sex; Is there life after being Big in Oz Rock?; Van Morrison; Bob Dylan; Paul Kelly; The Reels; Whittle Family; Tactics; Western Flyer; Motels.

RAM No. 121
Cheap Trick - Sheer Magnificence; The Who - The Kids Are Alright; Swanee; Ry Cooder; Tom Verlaine; The Stranglers; Hello Sailor; The Bishops; Eddie Money; Kevin Coyne; Randy Newman; Lipstick Killers; Van Morrison; La Femme; The Jam.

RAM No. 122
Jon English - from Superstar back to rock roots; Blondie vs American Morality; The Boomtown Rats; Rockpile in Oz; Elton John thru the ages; Bruce Springsteen; Mondo Rock; Monty Python; Patti Smith.



RAM No. 123
Graham Parker - the 1979 interview, Status Quo; Stevie Wonder; AC/DC; Doc Neeson & Jim Barnes - the summit talk; Gary Numan; The Lonely Hearts; Flowers; Is it time to revive the '70s; Dave Warner; Ray Arnott; Models; Sneakers; The Heaters, Kinks

RAM No. 124
Jo Jo Zep - at last the year of the Falcon, Mental As Anything; The Police; Mar Hunter interview, Monty Python's - Life Of Brian; Alien; The Members in Oz; Loaded Dice; Boomtown Rats; Little Feat; Th' Dudes; Manikins; Marc Bolan; Boston

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OZ Singles

This Week	Last		
1	(1)	SHADDAP YOU FACE	Joe Dolce Music Theatre
2	(2)	(JUST LIKE) STARTING OVER	John Lennon
3	(3)	THE TIME WARP	Original Cast, Rocky Horror Picture Show
4	(5)	THE TIDE IS HIGH	Blondie
5	(8)	ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST	Queen
6	(4)	WOMAN IN LOVE	Barbra Streisand
7	(6)	DON'T STAND SO CLOSE TO ME	The Police
8	(13)	•DUNCAN	Slim Dusty
9	(10)	STATE OF THE HEART	Mondo Rock
10	(11)	FEELS LIKE I'M IN LOVE	Kelly Marie
11	(14)	ONE STEP AHEAD	Split Enz
12	(7)	MASTER BLASTER	Stevie Wonder
13	(12)	CAN YOU FEEL IT	Jacksons
14	(9)	ROCK HARD	Suzi Quatro
15	(17)	JESSE	Carly Simon
16	(22)	•ON AND ON AND ON	Abba
17	(20)	LADY	Kenny Rogers
18	(16)	PASSION	Rod Stewart
19	(15)	SO LONG	Fischer-Z
20	(18)	YOU SHOOK ME ALL NIGHT LONG	AC/DC
21	(21)	KISS ON MY LIST	Daryl Hall & John Oates
22	(19)	DREAMIN'	Cliff Richard
23	(29)	•WHY WON'T YOU EXPLAIN	Karen Knowles
24	(39)	•I BELIEVE IN YOU	Don Williams
25	(24)	HE'S SO SHY	Pointer Sisters
26	(26)	JOHNNY AND MARY	Robert Palmer
27	(25)	KISS ARMY/NORMDRUM	Norman Gunston
28	(23)	THE WANDERER	Donna Summer
29	(—)	COULD I HAVE THIS DANCE	Anne Murray
30	(—)	(Just Like) ROMEO AND JULIET	Mental As Anything
31	(—)	LOVE ON THE ROCKS	Neil Diamond
32	(28)	BIRD NOISES	Midnight Oil
33	(32)	I LIKE CHINESE	Monty Python
34	(—)	•I WANT TO BE STRAIGHT	Ian Dury & The Blockheads
35	(36)	SPEND THE NIGHT	Cheetah
36	(33)	HUNGRY HEART	Bruce Springsteen
37	(—)	NEVER MIND THE PRESENTS	The Barron Knights
38	(—)	STOP THE CAVALRY	Jona Lewie
39	(34)	TWO FACES HAVE I	Ol' 55
40	(—)	I'M COMING OUT	Diana Ross

OZ Albums

This Week	Last		
1	(1)	DOUBLE FANTASY	John Lennon & Yoko Ono
2	(2)	GUILTY	Barbra Streisand
3	(3)	ZENYATTA MONDATTA	The Police
4	(4)	ALWAYS	Willie Nelson
5	(5)	SUPER TROUPER	Abba
6	(7)	HOTTER THAN JULY	Stevie Wonder
7	(6)	ICEHOUSE	Flowers
8	(9)	EAGLES LIVE	Eagles
9	(12)	AUTOAMERICAN	Blondie
10	(8)	ANNE MURRAY'S GREATEST HITS	Anne Murray
11	(13)	BACK IN BLACK	AC/DC
12	(11)	1980 THE SUMMER	Various Artists
13	(10)	THE BEST OF KENNY ROGERS VOL. 2	Kenny Rogers
14	(14)	MAKING MOVIES	Dire Straits
15	(17)	FOOLISH BEHAVIOUR	Rod Stewart
16	(24)	•THE JAZZ SINGER	Neil Diamond
17	(18)	THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW	Soundtrack
18	(19)	SCARY MONSTERS	David Bowie
19	(16)	HAWKS & DOVES	Neil Young
20	(21)	GAUCHO	Steely Dan
21	(15)	MONTY PYTHON'S CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATION ALBUM	Monty Python
22	(20)	TRIUMPH	Jacksons
23	(22)	PARIS	Supertramp
24	(25)	DIVINE MADNESS	Bette Midler
25	(27)	LIVE	Fleetwood Mac
26	(30)	EAST	Cold Chisel
27	(29)	UNMASKED	Kiss
28	(28)	THE TURN OF A FRIENDLY CARD	Alan Parsons Project
29	(33)	THE RIVER	Bruce Springsteen
30	(—)	•SUZI QUATRO'S 18 GREATEST HITS	Suzi Quatro
31	(23)	CHIPMUNK PUNK	The Chipmunks
32	(32)	STARDUST	Willie Nelson
33	(26)	GIVE ME THE NIGHT	George Benson
34	(—)	•THE BOYS LIGHT UP	Australian Crawl
35	(34)	TRUE COLOURS (Laser-Etched Record)	Split Enz
36	(31)	ROCK HARD	Suzi Quatro
37	(36)	PIONEERS	Wallis & Matilda
38	(37)	XANADU	Motion Picture Soundtrack
39	(35)	ABSOLUTE ANTHOLOGY	The Easybeats
40	(—)	CHAMELEON	David Bowie

UK Singles

This Week	Last		
1	(4)	STARTING OVER	John Lennon & Yoko Ono
2	(1)	STOP THE CAVALRY	Jona Lewie
3	(3)	THERE'S NO ONE QUITE LIKE GRANDMA	St Winifred's School Choir
4	(6)	DE DO DO DO	Police
5	(5)	EMBARRASSMENT	Madness
6	(2)	SUPER TROUPER	Abba
7	(7)	RUNAWAY BOYS	Stray Cats
8	(14)	•FLASH	Queen
8	(15)	•ANTMUSIC	Adam & The Ants
10	(8)	BANANA REPUBLIC	Boomtown Rats
11	(19)	•RABBIT	Chas & Dave
12	(—)	•HAPPY CHRISTMAS/WAR IS OVER	John Lennon & Yoko Ono
13	(11)	LADY	Kenny Rogers
14	(—)	•THIS WRECKAGE	Gary Numan
15	(9)	TO CUT A LONG STORY SHORT	Spandau Ballet
16	(10)	DO YOU FEEL MY LOVE?	Eddie Grant
17	(—)	•IMAGINE	John Lennon
18	(13)	LIES	Status Quo
19	(17)	LOVE ON THE ROCKS	Neil Diamond
20	(—)	•OVER THE RAINBOW/YOU BELONG TO ME	Matchbox
21	(16)	CELEBRATION	Kool & The Gang
22	(—)	•NEVER MIND THE PRESENTS	Barron Knights
23	(27)	EARTH DIES SCREAMING/ DREAM A LIE	UB40
24	(21)	LONELY TOGETHER	Barry Manilow
25	(26)	TOO NICE TO TALK TO	The Beat
26	(30)	MY GIRL	Rod Stewart
27	(25)	DECEMBER WILL BE MAGIC	Kate Bush
28	(—)	DO NOTHING	Specials
29	(29)	HEARTBREAK HOTEL	The Jacksons
30	(12)	THE TIDE IS HIGH	Blondie

UK Albums

This Week	Last		
1	(1)	SUPER TROUPER	Abba
2	(5)	DOUBLE FANTASY	John Lennon & Yoko Ono
3	(7)	GREATEST HITS	Dr Hook
4	(13)	•BARRY	Barry Manilow
5	(2)	GUILTY	Barbra Streisand
6	(8)	CHART-EXPLOSION	Various
6	(—)	•FLASH GORDON	Queen
8	(6)	INSPIRATIONS	Elvis Presley
8	(10)	NOT THE NINE O'CLOCK NEWS	Cast
10	(8)	ZENYATTA MONDATTA	Police
11	(3)	AUTOAMERICAN	Blondie
12	(27)	•20 GOLDEN GREATS OF KEN DODD	Ken Dodd
13	(12)	JAZZ SINGER	Neil Diamond
14	(14)	MANILOW MAGIC	Barry Manilow
15	(20)	•SINGS 20 No. 1 HITS	Brotherhood Of Man
16	(21)	•ABSOLUTELY	Madness
17	(3)	SOUND AFFECTS	The Jam
18	(11)	CLASSICS FOR DREAMING	James Last
19	(17)	FOOLISH BEHAVIOUR	Rod Stewart
20	(26)	ACE OF SPADES	Motorhead
21	(—)	•BEATLE BALLADS	Beatles
22	(16)	KINGS OF THE WILD FRONTIER	Adam & The Ants
23	(24)	HOTTER THAN JULY	Stevie Wonder
24	(—)	•AXE ATTACK	Various
25	(—)	•BRIGHT LIGHTS	Showaddywaddy
26	(22)	SIGNING OFF	UB40
27	(25)	SANDINISTA!	The Clash
28	(—)	SCARY MONSTERS	David Bowie
29	(—)	SLADE SMASHES	Slade
30	(15)	BEST OF BARRY MANILOW	Barry Manilow

USA Singles

This Week	Last		
1	(4)	STARTING OVER	John Lennon & Yoko Ono
2	(1)	LADY	Kenny Rogers
3	(3)	MORE THAN I CAN SAY	Leo Sayer
4	(2)	MASTER BLASTER	Stevie Wonder
5	(5)	ANOTHER ONE BITES THE DUST	Queen
6	(7)	LOVE ON THE ROCKS	Neil Diamond
7	(8)	HIT ME WITH YOUR BEST SHOT	Pat Benatar
8	(9)	HUNGRY HEART	Bruce Springsteen
9	(10)	GUILTY	Barbra Streisand/ Barry Gibb
10	(13)	THE TIDE IS HIGH	Blondie
11	(12)	EVERY WOMAN IN THE WORLD	Air Supply
12	(11)	WOMAN IN LOVE	Barbra Streisand
13	(16)	PASSION	Rod Stewart
14	(15)	DE DO DO DO DE DA DA DA	The Police
15	(21)	•CELEBRATION	Kool & The Gang
16	(18)	TELL IT LIKE IT IS	Heart
17	(6)	THE WANDERER	Donna Summer
18	(14)	YOU'VE LOST THAT LOVIN' FEELING	Daryl Hall & John Oates
19	(20)	SUDDENLY	Olivia Newton-John/Cliff Richard
20	(26)	•HEY NINETEEN	Steely Dan
21	(24)	IT'S MY TURN	Diana Ross
22	(25)	I MADE IT THROUGH THE RAIN	Barry Manilow
23	(19)	WHIP IT	Devo
24	(30)	•THIS IS TIME	Andy Gibb
25	(27)	I BELIEVE IN YOU	Don Williams
26	(28)	ONE STEP CLOSER	The Doobie Brothers
27	(32)	•I LOVE A RAINY NIGHT	Eddie Rabbitt
28	(22)	THEME FROM THE DUKES OF HAZZARD	Waylon Jennings
29	(23)	EVERYBODY'S GOT TO LEARN SOMETIME	The Korgis
30	(—)	•MISS SUN	Boz Scaggs

USA Albums

This Week	Last		
1	(13)	•DOUBLE FANTASY	John Lennon & Yoko Ono
2	(1)	GREATEST HITS	Kenny Rogers
3	(3)	GUILTY	Barbra Streisand
4	(4)	CRIMES OF PASSION	Pat Benatar
5	(5)	EAGLES LIVE	The Eagles
6	(2)	HOTTER THAN JULY	Stevie Wonder
7	(7)	THE GAME	Queen
8	(8)	THE JAZZ SINGER	Neil Diamond
9	(6)	THE RIVER	Bruce Springsteen
10	(11)	GAUCHO	Steely Dan
11	(12)	ZENYATTA MONDATTA	The Police
12	(9)	BACK IN BLACK	AC/DC
13	(15)	AUTOAMERICAN	Blondie
14	(17)	GREATEST HITS/LIVE	Heart
15	(18)	FOOLISH BEHAVIOUR	Rod Stewart
16	(10)	ONE STEP CLOSER	Doobie Brothers
17	(14)	TRIUMPH	The Jacksons
18	(22)	BARRY	Barry Manilow
19	(19)	CHRISTOPHER CROSS	Christopher Cross
20	(16)	ANNE MURRAY'S GREATEST HITS	Anne Murray
21	(—)	•LIVE	Fleetwood Mac
22	(20)	FACES	Earth, Wind & Fire
23	(26)	THE TURN OF A FRIENDLY CARD	The Alan Parsons Project
24	(24)	CELEBRATE	Kool & The Gang
25	(23)	THE WANDERER	Donna Summer
26	(21)	GREATEST HITS VOL TWO	Linda Ronstadt
27	(31)	GREATEST HITS	The Doors
28	(25)	DIANA	Diana Ross
29	(30)	MAKING MOVIES	Dire Straits
30	(—)	•HITS!	Boz Scaggs

Vinyl Vibing

Captain Beefheart. Pic: Jill Furmanowsky/LFI

Healthy Heartbeef

CAPTAIN BEEFHEART & THE MAGIC BAND
Doc At The Radar Station (Virgin)

Cult figures with a long recording history face the critical peril of being reviewed either by old fans who can't see beyond past glories, or Johnny-come-latelies who think they've made a discovery.
Inevitably people are comparing the earlier incarnations of the Magic Band (through which more than twenty players passed) with the present one; and wondering whether Don Van Vliet is still the same inspired madman. Suffice it that if you do get curious about the Captain, the 1970 *Trout Mask Replica* double should definitely be sought out, and any of the albums up to *Clear Spot*, plus last year's *Shiny Beast*.

But on with the motley... *Doc At The Radar Station* isn't really breaking new ground - for Beefheart. On the other hand it's still pretty radical compared to most rock, and though the avant garde has caught up and gone beyond him in some areas (e.g. in synthesiser use), Beefheart's creative departure point, his idea of what's interesting to put on a record, remains refreshing.

Hot Head opens side one, a simple rhythm guitar riff with a slide figure that distorts the sense of 'where's one' in classic Beefheart style. *Ashtray Heart* has a passionate vocal over a fast scratchy shuffle, with some wonderful lines - *'Somebody's had too much to think', 'send your mother home your navel'*... and again, the off-beat falls strangely.

Run Paint Run Run has the same rhythm feel, but the vocal with its answering chorus goes right back to the late '50s doo-wop curiosity *Mellow Saxophone. Sue Egypt* is my favourite: dramatic lyric in the best surreal-poetry'n'jazz tradition over fuzz guitars, interspersed with mellotron flutes. *Brickbats* has the most complicated structure so far, with many time changes performed with a charming sloppiness.

'She's not bad: she's just genetically mean' - that's the glistening young girl in *Dirty Blue Gene* (daughter of Zappa's *Mr. Green Genes?)* The theme of *Best Batch Yet* doesn't quite struggle out over the strong guitar figure; but the hysterical paranoia of *Telephone* does (though it sounds like the band were playing another song, probably in another room).

Sheriff Of Hong Kong wins the Longest and Trickiest Award - everyone must have been counting odd bars furiously. The Captain wails, screams and growls (and somehow makes music), while in the closing *Making Love To A Vampire With A Monkey On My Knee* he returns to the chanted declamation style of *Sue Egypt*, with equal effect.

Both poets and musicians work with sounds: Beefheart ignores the boundaries, relishing the words while keeping the music far more prominent than mere accompaniment. Similarly one must enlarge one's definition of singing to encompass him: beyond the convention of vocal melody lies an uncharted territory of wild *expression.* Out there, Beefheart is a seasoned explorer while John Lydon has just begun to get his feet wet; and he can still pull in a tune when he wants. The current Magic Band may not be quite what long term devotees remember fondly, but they can match free spirits with the Captain. Maybe you can too.

Greg Taylor

MARTHA AND THE MUFFINS
Trance And Dance (Virgin)

The Canadian band who signed to Virgin Records, went to England and were suddenly celebrities back home (sounds familiar, doesn't it?) became celebrities out here with their hit single, *Echo Beach.*

The success of *Echo Beach* is sure to attract many listeners to *Trance and Dance,* Martha And The Muffins' second album.

The band's sound is light and breezy. Keyboards and vocals are shared by the band's two Marthas - Martha Johnson and Martha Ladley. Carl Finke plays bass, Andy Haas sax, Tim Gane drums and percussion whilst formative member, Mark Gane provides guitar, vocals and synthetics.

The Muffins' music is full of modern laments - false friends and disillusionment on *Be Blase,* insomnia on the track of the same name, and the necessity of appearances (cleverly transposed to the story of an ageing actress) in *Am I On.* It's all bright and zany as the B-52's, but not so weird.

There is something very middle class about their *intelligent* observations. The Muffins don't sound desperate. Their agitation is caused by mental rather than physical fears. They don't write about fighting on the streets, nor fighting for their next mouthful. But then the Muffins are from Canada where the living is easier than in London. In fact, it's very similar to Australia.

The songs are word heavy in an attractive way. Remember that line, *'My job is very boring. I'm an office clerk'?* It sounded cumbersome, but somehow wouldn't get out of your head.

That quality is shared by many of *Trance And Dance's* 12 tracks, though none of them are as instantly appealing. The Muffins' music is for parties on the back patio. It's good to dance to, has some refreshing lyrics. It's not too heavy and it's not too esoteric. It falls somewhere in the middle.

Miranda Brown

DR. POO
Knees Ahoy (ABC Records)

If ever the Fraser government needed an excuse to cut back the Public Service and continue screwing the ABC, they need look no further than this piece of unmitigated rubbish from 2JJJ. Possibly the greatest waste of taxpayers money since the Vietnam war, its very right to exist would only be defended by the most ardent advocates of free speech and civil liberties.

Disguised as a comedy record and produced by a government agency that has no obligation to recoup its losses by producing anything marketable, Dr. Poo's *Knees Ahoy* sounds like nothing so much as a D grade Monty Python imitation, heavily diluted with primary school bums-and-toilets jokes. Whether by design or by coincidence, those responsible have taken some lines directly from records by the American group Firesign Theater - and shown how easy it is to butcher other people's stuff.

There is no need to grace this disaster with any further verbiage, except to say that it may just appeal to a special kind of person, the kind who corner you at parties or whose family one might inadvertently marry into. As Chuck Barris of The Gong Show put it, "I just love this act, but then I like gastric infections".

Pat Stell

BLACK RUSSIAN
Black Russian (Astor)

Take one cup of soul/funk, blend with repetitive lyrics, a dash of West Coast slick and spunky female vocalist to taste... Voila! Black Russian, a group of once successful Soviet musicians who moved West about six years ago.

Serge Kapustin writes most of their material (pleasant but unremarkable soul-tinted pop) and plays guitar; Natasha Kapustin sings and Vladimir Schneider joins the others on assorted keyboards, synthesisers and backing vocals. With a little help from Guy Costa, they also produce and arrange all their own songs - a pity really because, with better production, this album could have improved by about 50%. The instrument levels and placings remain fairly static throughout, which does nothing to liven Serge's equally uninteresting material.

The sound is unmistakably Western but, at time, almost too much so. It's as if the trio had studied a book on how to write successful, bourgeois pop songs, memorised it to the letter and worked from there. The music seems to come from a formula - much like Abba's - and their lyrics are painfully reminiscent of a Russian/English pocket dictionary.

Yet, despite all that and a pretty unimaginative concept, this album isn't altogether bad... not something I'd play through choice, but by no means unlistenable.

Samantha Trenoweth

JOHN McLAUGHLIN
RETURN TO FOREVER
BILLY COBHAM
ERIC GALE
TOM SCOTT
MAYNARD FERGUSON
The Best Of Collections (CBS)

Reviewing six albums at once is no mean feat. Especially when they are as diverse as *The Best of Eric Gale* and *The Best of the Mahavishnu Orchestra.* CBS must have some reason for lumping them together in this collection, but it does seem rather like putting Christie Allen and Jimmy & The Boys on the same side of a $4.99 20 Suburban Hits album.

The artists featured are Return to Forever, Billy Cobham, Eric Gale, Tom Scott, Maynard Ferguson and Mahavishnu Orchestra. The two variables which affect the merits of the individual records seem to be (a) how long the artist has been with CBS, and (b) the tastes of whoever selected the tracks, which is sometimes incomprehensible. Why for instance, as happens on the Maynard Ferguson album, would you put a nauseous arrangement of *Macarthur Park,* followed by a distressing interpretation of *Theme of Star Trek* right before a dynamite re-working of Weather Report's *Birdland?* Hard to say.

The CBS contract factor is shown best on *The Best Of Billy Cobham* album, which necessarily omits all the stuff he did on Atlantic Records. Atlantic previously released a record of the same name that has a great selection of material from *Spectrum, Cross-winds* and *Total Eclipse.* The later CBS work is not nearly as interesting and you'd be better off listening to the Mahavishnu Orchestra album to hear good Billy Cobham drumming.

The Mahavishnu album is great. They did all their recording with CBS and the selection is a good cross section of work by a band that put out quite a variety of

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styles. All the tracks are worth listening to, notably, *Sister Andrea,* off the live *Between Nothingness and Eternity* album, and *Birds Of Fire.*

The same applies to Return To Forever, and although the original R.T.F. is not featured, the Corea/Clarke/White/Dimeola version is the one that most people are familiar with, and would expect in any case. Some may dispute the choice of tracks, but R.T.F. fans are a curious breed who will argue it out amongst themselves.

Tom Scott's album is much more middle of the road. For those unfamiliar with him, Tom Scott is a Hollywood cum L.A. band leader well known for his session work and TV movie themes. *Gotcha,* the last track on this album, is actually the theme from Starsky & Hutch. Good music for driving fast cars by and concealing guns to. There are some good players featured, including Bob James, Joe Sample and Ralph MacDonald. Leonard Feather describes one track, *Tom Cat,* as being one of his more "popularly accessible pieces." It's all pretty accessible really.

Eric Gale is a long time New York jazz and r&b guitarist who has played with the likes of Stanley Turrentine, Aretha Franklin, Marvin Gaye, Joe Cocker, Paul Simon, etc. His playing in some of these is beautiful, and his rhythm playing is second to none. This selection has Gale right up front, and seems a fraction bland as a consequence.

There are a couple of great tracks though, the best being the rolling, gospel flavoured *Oh! Mary Don't You Weep.*

Briefly then, the way I see it is this. **Maynard Ferguson,** a terrible selection, but some great trumpet playing. **Billy Cobham,** buy the Atlantic album, which really is the Best Of. **Mahavishnu Orchestra,** great. Can't fault it. **Return To Forever,** probably great if you like Return To Forever. **Tom Scott,** good homicide music. **Eric Gale,** very smooth, but you're probably better listening to him on other people's records, or in the band stuff.

Pat Shell

WARREN ZEVON
Stand In The Fire (Asylum)

The first time Zevon's music was indelibly slammed into my psyche was at a Chisel concert a couple of years ago. Darkness had fallen, the bitter wind had picked up badly, thousands of wasted teenage refugees were stumbling around the dusty arena up on whatever galvanizing mind-fuckers they could gorge in, bonfires were erupting around the ground and the cops were visibly nervous. And out of the PA came this tape of Zevon tearing the throat out of *Send Lawyers, Guns And Money.* It was the perfect, desperate soundtrack to wire a scene as devestating as any Sam Peckinpah's ever claimed responsibility for.

That's the level on which Warren Zevon operates. As a songwriter and performer, he's one of the best. Exiled, his characters are on the run. Supported only by their guns and a betrayed conviction in themselves, they've got nothing to lose. But instead of giving up, they pull the trigger and blast away at everything in sight.

Recorded live at The Roxy in L.A. *Stand In The Fire* captures that spirit. The band (despite the departure of *Excitable Boy* guitarist Waddy Watchel) blasts through with a tough and blistering display of rock'n'roll firepower.

Though tracks like *Stand In The Fire, Jeannie Needs A Shooter* (co-written with Bruce Springsteen), *Excitable Boy, Werewolves Of London* (his '78 Oz hit), *Lawyers, Guns And Money,* and pacey rippers like *The Sin,* Zevon shoots from the hip, splattering the bar-room walls.

Produced by Zevon and Greg Ladanyi (who hit the limelight with his engineering on Jackson Browne's *Running On Empty)* the album punches the speakers relentlessly. And even when the pace is dropped for his celebration of rock'n'roll, *Mohammed's Radio,* or the heartfelt *I'll Sleep When I'm Dead,* those punches aren't pulled. Lead guitarist David Landau breaks out with some truly frenetic playing while the rhythm section of Roberto Pinon and Marty Stinger charge through like tank commanders in hostile territory.

It all adds up to an album that slashes with wreckless flair and thankfully avoids the MOR polish that L.A. rock is prone to.

Andrew McMillan

PAT BENATAR
Crimes Of Passion (Chrysalis)

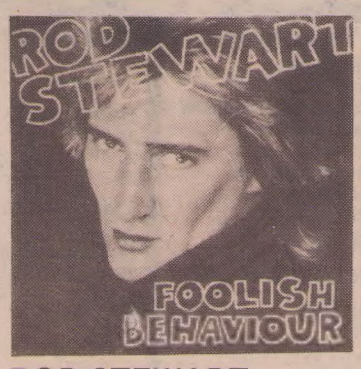
A trained opera singer, Benatar has the sort of voice you don't often hear within a rock/pop context. She can sing rough, sing sweet, lower her voice to lusty rumble or trill as high and clear as a canary. All she needs is failsafe material to wrap her vocal chords around, and *Crimes Of Passion* is as failsafe in musical appeal as the pouting sexy cover shot is in current fashion.

No risks are taken: neither she or the band stretch out beyond well-honed capabilities. She can, for instance, hit with ease every note Kate Bush reaches on *Wuthering Heights,* and more, she can make the words intelligible. But she won't risk Kate's eclectic songwriting range, sticking instead to tried and true formats of being a prisoner of love, imploring her man to treat her right, or demanding he hits her with his best shot, finally blurting *"I need you"* to a disappearing lover.

The Rascals' old hit *You Better Run* is delivered in rich fluid tones, and there's a luscious vocal lilt on *Little Paradise.*

The one grating performance is *Hell Is For Children,* a song about child battering, and a trite treatment of one of society's worst evils. Tastelessly enough, it comes directly after a facile ode to passion, *Hit Me With Your Best Shot.*

Derek Johnson



ROD STEWART
Foolish Behaviour (Warner Bros)

Foolish Behaviour reveals the *Passion* single as a deft, happy, one-off from an otherwise turgid set of 1980 recording sessions for the Rod Stewart Group. When inspiration fails, it seems, the Group weigh in with several pastiches of ponderous riffs, trying to liven up the leaden proceedings with cross-style harmonies, including a Sex Pistols-type refrain on the title track.

Meanwhile, Rod warbles and croaks about his recent marital manoeuvres, sometimes illuminated by sly glints of rascally humour, and sometimes not. It's not that he doesn't have what still deserves to be termed a magnificent voice, it's not that the band can't play with tailored style and tasty heaviness.

It's just that the whole thing has become as predictable as, well, 'it's almost Xmas so here's another Rod Stewart album'. This year's model comes with a giant, two-sided colour poster, and a polka dot cover.

Derek Johnson

ROCKPILE
Seconds Of Pleasure (F-Beat)

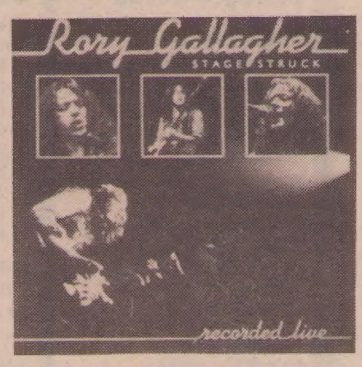
Though this is the first album under the Rockpile moniker, it's sort of No. 6, when you count the various solo efforts of Dave Edmunds and Nick Lowe. As a debut it would be extraordinary, and even matched against some past glories it stands up well. Their Oz tour had its sloppy moments, but these Seconds are tight, exuberant celebrations of rock when it had roll.

Some of the English copies had a bonus EP featuring Lowe and Edmunds 'doing the Everly Brothers', and it's in this period that their affection and inspiration firmly lies. The originals slot right in with the Chuck Berry and Joe Tex covers, and the feels, from rockaboogie, shuffle, rock-steady, to fast 16-to-the-bar, are just immaculate. America may sink beneath the waves, but its dancing heritage is safe in the hands of these old English lags.

There's a fine balance between taking such custodianship seriously - they can sing some great corn straight - and in sending it up by making the craftsmanship almost *too* perfect. Hence Lowe's opener, *Teacher Teacher* and *Heart* (the latter with some classy lead vocal from guitarist Billy Bremmer), and the superb *When I Write The Book.* The one song with real, non-pop style sentiments isn't a Rockpile composition, but Difford/Tilbrook's *Wrong Way* might well come from the Rockpile heart: *'The journalist writes down the things that he hears/And he forgets the things that you feel'... 'You feel in the first set/That this is a nightmare/You can't hear a word/And you can't feel a thing/The manager looks on/Ignoring the problem/Cause he's the solution/So what's in it for him?'*

It may be like that some nights. But on this set Rockpile sound like they're feeling *great.*

Greg Taylor



RORY GALLAGHER
Stage Struck (Festival)

This is Gallagher's eleventh album in so many years, sixteenth, including the albums he did with Taste, since 1969. In fact, this is the fifth live album, and it's always his live albums that show just why he is a legendary guitarist. Always a full-on blues based player, he has never succumbed to the star machine pressures that have mellowed other guitar heroes, relishing in touring constantly and playing in battered jeans on his battered guitars where other thirty year old rockers have slipped gracefully into their Rolls Royces.

The style is rough and ready and very much dominated by Gallagher's sizzling guitar work which screams and flurries and weeps through eight original favourites as only he can. The limitations are the expected ones of live three-piece work — a little thinness when the solos occur, but the rhythm section is fast and fat and very, very tight. Long-time bass player Gerry McAvoy has knitted together with ex-Sensational Alex Harvey Band drummer Ted McKenna superbly, though for most of the album, they are both very much the backing musicians, only really stretching out on some of the more arranged tracks like *Moonchild* from the *Calling Card* set and *Last Of The Independents* where McKenna gets in a couple of flashy rolls. Most of the tracks are from the *Photo-Finish* LP, but included are *Bought And Sold* from *Against The Grain* and *Wayward Child* and *Follow Me* from *Top Priority,* the most recent studio set.

Gallagher writes tough, fast rock and roll with lyrics that reflect the usual male rock personality interests, without trying to make any stands or broadcast any messages. Perhaps that's why he hasn't broken into the major league money spinners. But he has stayed true to his roots and plays harder, faster and dirtier than ever, stamping his distorted Stratocaster lead and slide work across all he plays, his growling voice grinding out like a bulldozer over it all with as much subtlety as a sledgehammer. The difference between him and those grotesque American copyists is that Gallagher still plays like he's hungry — he still writes street-level, and, thankfully, isn't obsessed with writing about being *'ontheroadwiththeband,Man'.* This album probably won't win him any new fans, but will at least satisfy his present ones that he is still there, tearing away. How many other thirty year olds can say after fifteen years in the business that all they've got out of a dozen albums is a small flat in London and half a dozen battered Strats... and sound convincing?

Michael Smith

GARY MOORE
Back On The Streets (MCA)

With this album, you can see why Gary Moore was constantly at odds with Phil Lynott - he is just *too* full of energy to limit himself to Lizzy's carefully structured material. Of course, that also means that Moore is also guilty of giving himself too *much* room to display his abilities, with the result that this album has plenty of jagged edges, literally bursting at the seams in trying to get Moore across all in one go. But when it does come together, and for the most part it does, it's a brilliant showcase of a very talented musician.

Coming from Thin Lizzy, you'd expect a fair amount of derivative styles on some tracks, but this is much less evident here than on the debut Wild Horses album by former Lizzy, Brian Robertson. And this is surprising since three of the eight tracks were not only written by Lynott but feature his bass playing and fellow Lizzy Brian Downey on drums. But Moore avoids that twin guitar line that is so distinctively Lizzy, even where some of the vocal is Lynott. Most of the vocal work is Moore's and he shows himself no mean singer as well as guitarist - strong and gritty. The Lynott tracks aren't especially significant but they do give Moore a chance to play some evocative bluesy licks.

Moore's own songs show his debt to at least two other guitar heroes - Beck and McLaughlin. There is the gritty rock style of the old Beck with some of the later Beck's jazz-rock leanings blending with a speed that comes close to McLaughlin with a much greater raunch. The blistering opener *Back On The Streets* recalls all the old riff-oriented bands but powers along with renewed fervour, ripping the whole style apart, while instrumental tracks like *Hurricane* and *Flight Of The Snow Moose* let him switch from speed to boogie to funk to jazz fusion and even classical acoustic styles.

The rhythm section on the non-Lizzy tracks are amazing, especially drummer Simon Phillips, who puts in the fastest double bass drum work I've heard in years, supported by bassist John Mole, while Airey often keeps in note for note with Moore's blistering pace. The album is full of contrasts, with no real direction or theme to tie it neatly together, but then all debut albums reflect their makers' diverse influences to varying extents, and this one does it exceptionally well for this versatile performer. It's not *just* a heavy metal album, jazz rock or ballad album, but all of them with Moore's guitar the connection. A great start to a solo career.

Michael Smith

STATUS QUO
Just Supposin' (PolyGram)

Almost three years ago, during their last Australian tour, Status Quo started planning their Twentieth Anniversary celebrations. They're that close and the band was that confident they'd be rockin' on for years to come!

I wasn't so sure about the *rockin'* part. Every studio album since *Piledriver* had sounded great on AM radio and as tinny as a Coke can on the stereo. Admittedly, *Status Quo Live* sounded incredible but the studio albums lost the bass balls and carried on with the pacey tops.

And basically the story hadn't changed since then.

Until now! For Quo, *Just Supposin'* is a triumph! And for mainstream rock fans "It's okay, but it's nothin' to get excited about."

Stuff 'em! *Just Supposin'* is indeed a Quo triumph. For the first time in years they've scored with bass and they've created those vital elements of tension and borderline angst that make for great essential rock'n'roll.

Songs like *Over The Edge* roll through with resounding bass, adding that vitality that's been lost all too often on previous Quo excursions.

On *Don't Drive My Car,* Francis Rossi's vocals cry through like flashing lights on a darkened street while Andy Bown's keyboards and the twin guitar attack in the middle eight sweep the skies with all the searchlit tension that made the intro to the *Tommy* soundtrack so memorable. Come to think of it, Bown's keyboard style has always reminded me of *Prologue - 1945.*

Lies is your classic Quo workout - a slice of hard nosed British boogie that'd take you apart live and, if the cerebral conditions are right, in the lounge as well.

Name Of The Game harks back to the Quo sound of the early Seventies and songs like *Down The Dustpipe, Gerundula* and *In My Chair.* They've never lost that ubiquitous quality with their progression; just refined it.

And on *Coming And Going* they rip through with their classic mid-'70s Quo workout with the guitars, bass and Bob Young's harp interchanging lead.

Rock'n'Roll on the other hand is a dirgey number a la the Bee Gees circa '72 that's so musically cliched it's almost unbearable and yet

supports the most-telling auto-biographical lyric a member of a rock'n'roll band - that's been through what Quo have - could write.

Basically, I figure Quo have quit pussy-footing around. With John Eden *they've* produced the album and wrought the sounds that have been missing for so damned long. It is indeed a triumph. The sound is great and songs like *Over The Edge, Name Of The Game* and *Coming And Going* have put Quo back behind the eight ball. *Just Supposin'* is, without doubt, their greatest studio effort since *Piledriver.*

Andrew McMillan

THE RESIDENTS
Nibbles (Ralph/RTC)
The Residents' Commercial Album (Missing Link)

A 'Resident' for our purposes is one of four alleged humans who live in San Francisco and wage cultural war on nostalgia in music (especially pop, and more especially rock). Of course, in the process these Residents end up creating some rather novel pop and rock, sometimes almost nostalgia. So read the sleeve-notes on the Residents' *Nibbles* album...

The Residents are a phenomena unprecedented in rock'n'roll. In their eight-year-old career they've never appeared publicly nor revealed their true identity, and yet, with a series of albums - *Meet The Residents, Third Reich'n'Roll, Finger Prince, Duck Stab/Buster & Glen, Not Available* and *Eskimo* - and a handful of singles, on their own independent Ralph Records label, the Residents have acquired a *very* strong cult following. So strong, in fact, that to release a Residents album even in Australia is a viable proposition.

Nibbles has just been made available in only Australia and New Zealand. It is, the sleeve-notes claim: *The Residents first non-concept album. So non-concept, in fact, that no one has even bothered to tell the Residents that this record has been compiled. See, this is actually a collection of material taken from five different albums. Then one might say: "Oh, a greatest hits album", but those in the know just snicker at that. For one thing the Residents do not have any hits. Besides, if it were a 'greatest hits' collection, then it would be a concept album, and as has been previously stated, this is not a concept album.* It is, nonetheless, an excellent album.

Nibbles is basically an introduction to the Residents. Their music is designed to shatter your preconceptions of what rock'n'roll is. The Residents dismember rock'n'roll, then put it back together again in what seems like an arbitrary order. The effect is unsettling, almost scary; it affords a new perspective. According to the sleeve-notes: (The Residents') *music that comes closest to nostalgia ends up here on a record that anyone with even average imagination, wit and intelligence can listen to and enjoy... or perhaps despise.... this clever collection of musical titbits.*

There are no such copious sleeve-notes on *The Residents' Commercial Album* that might make my job easier.

The Commercial Album is the Residents' new album, and the first to be properly released in Australia, by Missing Link. It is, as the title suggests, an attempt at accessibility. Perhaps.

Unlike a lot of their earlier albums, such as *Third Reich'n'Roll* and *Not Available, The Commercial Album* consists of short pieces - 40, in fact (count 'em, 40!), each exactly one minute long. (The story goes that the Residents, unable to get any radio air-play, bought advertising time, in one-minute lumps, and simply used it to air entire tracks from *The Commercial Album.)* On this album, the Residents play about with many a musical style - from pop to ethnic to quasi-symphony to the Residents' own style itself - each given the Residents' unique treatment in sound; you always get the feeling that something's *out*, something's wrong.

With this format, *The Commercial Album* is as unsettling, as inaccessible, as any Residents album - because as soon as you begin to sink your teeth into a sing it ends. And they *are* highly evocative, very entertaining and amusing pieces of music - while they last. Eventually you just get confused.

But, of course, that's the way the Residents planned it, and after all, would they have it any other way?

Clinton Walker

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T O U R S

Flowers
January
24 Sandown Park Hotel
26 Sweetwater Festival (NZ)
27-28 Main Street (NZ)
31 Hordern Pavilion
February
4-5 Festival Hall (Melb)

Mentals
January
24-25 Arkaba Hotel
25 Beach Concert (Syd)
28 Council Club Hotel (Melb)
29 Pier Hotel
30 Sentimental Bloke
31 Sandown Park Hotel
February
2 Bexley North Hotel
3 Family Inn Hotel
4 Maroubra Seals
6 Manly Vale Hotel

Cold Chisel
January
26 Sweetwater Festival (NZ)
30 Cloudland Ballroom
31 Thompsons Hotel (Mooloolloobar)

Angels
February
1 Catalina Club (Batemans Bay)
4 Penrith Leagues
6-7 Doyalson RSL

Midnight Oil
January
24-25 Playroom

Swanee
January
24 Sefton Hotel
28 Council Club (Melb)
29 Armadale Hotel
30 Ferntree Gully Hotel
February
3 Prospect Hotel
4 Armadale Hotel
5 Stamford Hotel
6 Billboard
7 Village Green

Redgum
January
24-25 Tamworth Workers
31 Governors Pleasure

The Saints
January
24 Royal Antler

Matt Finnish
February
5 Armadale Hotel (Melb.)
6 Ferntree Gully Hotel
7 Martinis
January
24-25 Playroom

Outline
January
24 Bexley North
26 Bayview Tavern
29 War & Peace

The 88's
January
26 Doyalson RSL
29 Chester Hill Hotel
30 Forest Inn
31 The Castle

D Minor & The Dischords
January
24 Bexley North
26 Bayview Tavern
29 Sefton Hotel
30 Maroubra Jnr
31 Florida Hotel

Damaged Goods
January
24 Royal Antler
25 Doyalson RSL
27 Jolly Roger
29 Manzil Room
30 Florida Hotel

The Riptides
January
24 San Miguel Inn
27 Macies
28 Martinis
29 Pier Hotel
30 Sentimental Bloke
31 Sandown Park

Streetlevel
January
24 The Castle
25 Doyalson RSL
27 Jolly Roger
29 War & Peace
30 Bayview Tavern
February
1 Maroubra Bay Hotel

Metro
January
27 Manzil Room
28 Ambassador Nite Club

Matt Taylor Band with Phil Manning
January
25 Northern Subs Leagues
26 Governors Pleasure
28 Casino RSM
30 Cloudland (Brisb.)
3 Palais Royal
4 National Hotel
5 Playroom
6 Q.I.T.
7 Mooloolloobar Hotel

Radiators
January
24 Manly Vale Hotel
26 Sundowner Hotel

Vixen
January
25 Penrith Leagues

Rose Tattoo
January
25 ~~Astra Hotel (avo)~~

Sherbs
January
24 Parramatta Leagues
25 Manzil Room
27 Governors Pleasure
28 Mosman Hotel

Cyril B Bunter
January
24 Bayview Tavern

Radioactive
January
24 Riverwood Hotel
25 Blacktown Ice Rink

Mondo Rock
January
24 Stardust Room
25 Avalon RSL

Hands Off
January
24 Caringbah Inn
25 Avalon RSL
February
1 Blacktown Ice Rink

Imports
January
24 Musicians Club
28 Manzil Room

The Ideals
January
24 Comb & Cutter

Heaven
January
24 Florida Hotel

Sports
January
25 Blacktown Ice Rink

Meo 245
January
26 Sundowner Hotel
February
1 Blacktown Ice Rink

Moving Pictures
January
27 Royal Antler
29 Vicar of Wakefield

Hand Carved
January
24 Local Inn
27 Greysteynes Inn
31 Local Inn
February
3 Greysteynes Inn

IN X S
January
31 Royal Antler

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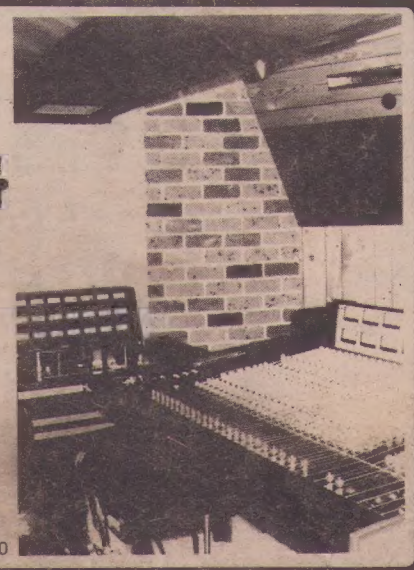

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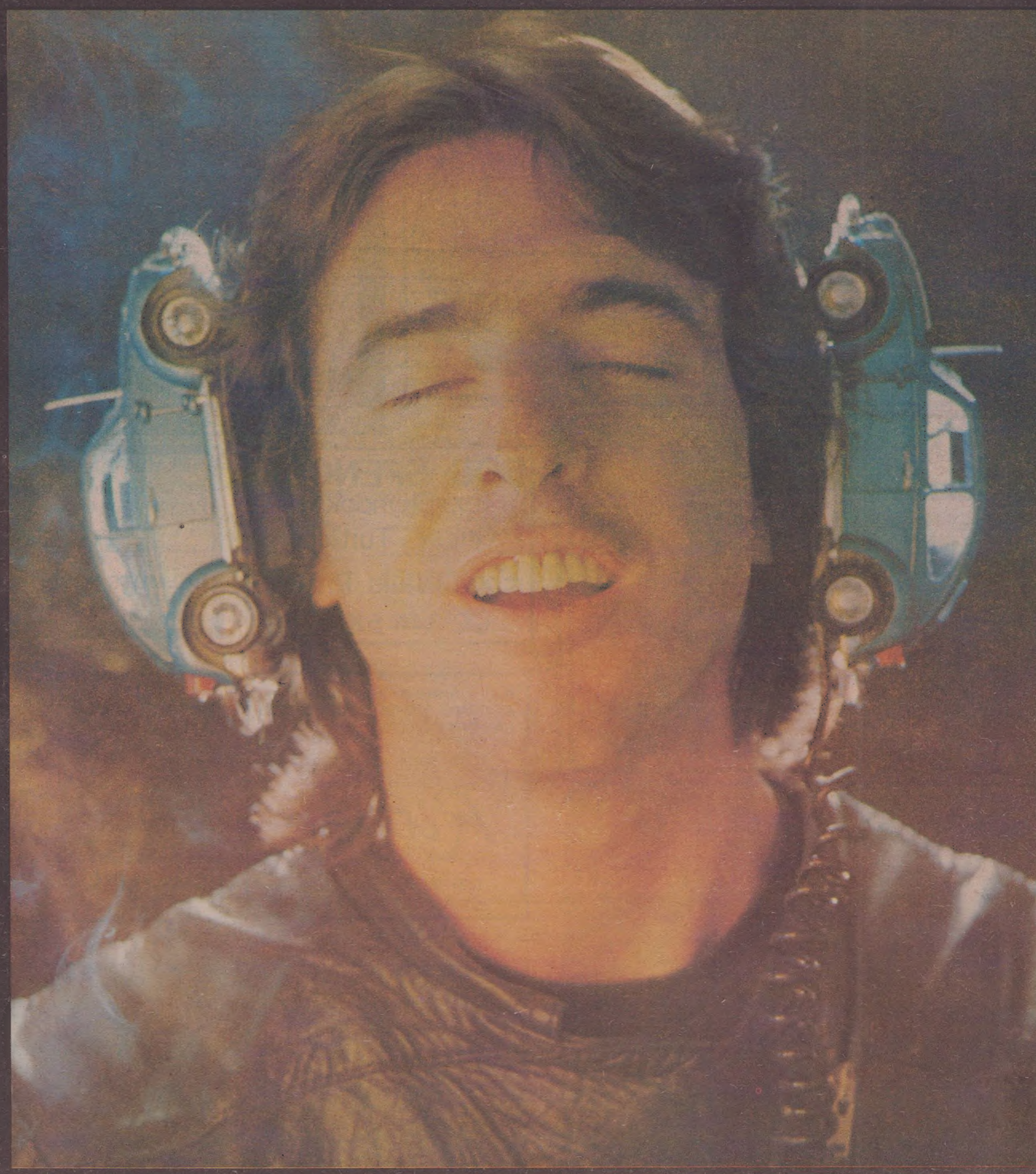

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